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PARENTAL LEGACIES,

CONSISTING OF

ADVICE FROM A LADY OF QUALITY

TO HER CHILDREN.

Delivered in the last Stage of a lingering Illness.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,
BY S. GLASSE, D. D. F. R. S.
Chaplain in Ordinary to his (British) Majesty.

AND

A FATHER'S LEGACY

TO HIS

DAUGHTERS.

By the late DR. GREGORY,
OF EDINBURGH.

Also a number of interesting and valuable Extracts from new Publications and other works of merit.

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it cannot injure it, as an honest man. For, without adhering with too servile an attachment to my author, I have endeavoured to express the sentiments before me as exactly as possible, except only in a very few passages; where, for obvious reasons, it was necessary to give a different turn to the expressions of this excellent woman. In all other instances, I have cause to think meanly of myself, in proportion as I have departed from the original; as nothing can be more pure, more instructive, or more affecting, than the genuine dictates of that heart, which gave utterance to these most interesting conferences.

If, upon the whole, the following work be read with candour; the translator has no doubt of the reader's indulgence; if otherwise, he has little to hope for, either with respect to the reader or himself. He who is desirous to profit by the instructions here presented to him, will be more disposed to transcribe them into his own conduct, than to criticise on the precise terms in which they are conveyed.

There never was a period, in which such an address to the prevailing manners of the age was more necessary than the present. It will be a matter of unspeakable satisfaction to me, if the following pages should lay the least restraint on any of the sons or daughters of pleasure; and if withdrawing their attention from the pursuit of a phantom, a bubble, and toy, they should direct it to those objects which religion recommends, which reason approves, and which virtue and good sense universally applaud and admire. S. G.

ADVERTISEMENT.

WE here present you with the pure effusions of parental tenderness: as filial affection preserved them from being lost, so a desire to promote the benefit of mankind has induced me to make them public.

This excellent woman having herself given us the history of her life in her first discourse, we shall only add, that she had every advantage of person and understanding; and that nothing can be more affecting than that display of female delicacy and manly sense, which appear in these conferences with her children.

Her discourse is chiefly directed to those two of her sons, who had engaged in a military life; in one of these conferences, she addresses herself particularly to her third son who had dedicated himself to the church: another is confined to the instruction of her daughter. In all of them, her admonitions are enforced with tears, and interrupted by sighs; they are the natural dictates of the tenderest affection, which no bodily infirmities could prevail with her to suppress. If the reader find not in this work those episodes, or that variety which distinguishes a romance; it is only because Truth wants none of these embellishments: she needs only to be seen, to command our attention and our admiration; the voice of nature is heard throughout the work, and the eloquence here displayed is the forcible language of the heart.

The evening being made choice of as the properest season for instruction, we find the work divided into EVENING CONFERENCES. The whole was faithfully collected by the industry of an AMANUENSIS, so placed, as to be an ear-witness of all that passed; had not this care been taken, the world would have been deprived of an invaluable system of education, which no one can read with inattention, and few without improvement.

It was a tribute justly due to the memory of such a lady, to transmit her name with all the respect which is due to it, to posterity. But as her humility induced her to wish that she might not be recorded after her death, we think ourselves obliged to do violence to our inclinations, in compliance with her last request.

Nor are we at all apprehensive, that this concealment

will impeach the authenticity of the work: it is conceived in such terms, as to convince any judicious reader, that such sentiments could only be founded in nature. Here are no brilliant conceits, no affected phrases; but the artless expressions of maternal affection: he who does not yield to the force of such evidence as this, must be considered as one, who cannot distinguish what is really the language of nature; or as one who never yet experienced the power of sentimental affection.

Probability does not always go hand in hand with truth; but they are happily united in this work. What indeed can be conceived more natural, than that a tender mother, anxious for her children's welfare, should take advantage of her gradually declining health to set before them the vanities of the world; and to give them the best directions for the regulation of their conduct? Let any man enter seriously into himself; listen to the language of his own heart—he will soon find, that those noble sentiments, which occur in the following pages, could never have been the offspring of imagination. The life of this incomparable mother was but too short, as it did not exceed 39 years; but she will yet live in these her genuine conferences, which no doubt will be watered with the reader's tears.

ADVICE

FROM A

LADY OF QUALITY

TO HER

CHILDREN.

CONFERENCE I.

The History of her own Life.

THE very weak state of health, in which I have now been eighteen months, forbids me to hope for any long continuation of my life: I have determined therefore, my dear children, to call you together, as well to discharge my obligations, as to amuse my sufferings. By the loss of your father, my duties as a mother seem to be redoubled; I am called upon to supply to you the want of his excellent advice, and to labor to render

you worthy inheritors of his glory and virtues.

You are not insensible from what ancest you derive your origin. Their history y are sufficiently acquainted with, to know w they were, and how they distinguished the selves: but perhaps their example may l sensibly affect your minds, than my advi especially if you consider, that it is your b friend who is now conversing with you; o whose instructions are the dictates of affecti and the result of a tender regard for your h piness. The only books, from which my p cepts shall be drawn, are experience, a kn ledge of the world, and a conviction of own heart.

Descended from a family not less dis guished by its misfortunes than its hono I was left an orphan at ten years of age. education fell under the direction of my ther's sister; whose inclination, as well rank, drew her frequently to court. No ti was lost in furnishing me with masters of ery kind. I soon became an object of att tion; and my friends took care to annou me possessed of a considerable fortune. T world presented itself to my view in the m

brilliant colours; and with singular delight I indulged the deception. A succession of amusements served to stifle reflection; and I seemed to live for no other purpose than to pursue my pleasures.

Sometimes my soul, not quite as yet debased, seemed desirous to soar above these enchanting trifles; but vanity and dissipation soon hurried me away, and effaced the impressions of reflection. How far from real happiness is a life of subjection to prevailing fashions; from which it has neither opportunity, nor resolution, to withdraw itself! In vain do we perceive the miseries which intrude themselves amidst the pleasures of the world; in vain do we receive instructions, by which we might be both affected and improved: we still continue enslaved to our passions, and eagerly embrace the phantom of delusion. I resembled those travellers, who, knowing the right way, yet thinking to shorten their journey, turn aside from it, and are lost.

All that were about me, conspired to fill my mind with false ideas; their language was that of flattery and deceit; they either concealed from me my faults, or they only corrected such as might serve to render me ridiculous.

Scarce had I begun the day, when my attendants made it their business to inspire me with a love of idleness and pleasure; one part of it was spent in decorating my person with all the ornaments of dress; and the other, in receiving the rewards of my unprofitable industry. I was admired, in proportion to my external appearance; and this admiration served only to feed my vanity.

I never shall forget, that, being one evening quite overcome with that satiety, which destroys the satisfaction of the votaries of pleasure, I opened by chance a volume of moral essays, a few pages of which filled my soul with confusion and remorse; "*Either,*" said I to myself, "*I am a dupe to the life which I now lead, or this writer is an egregious impostor.*"

These reflections began to disquiet me; when I was informed, that it was time for me to go to a ball, to which I had been invited; my guardian, who took me with her in her coach, observed that I was unusually pensive; for which she seriously reproved me. Though she was in many respects an excellent woman, she was almost wholly engaged in the pursuit of amusements: she repeated her cen-

sures, when we entered the ball-room, in which every thing appeared truly magnificent; the elegant taste of the D—ss of —— had brought together persons of the most eminent rank, beauty, and accomplishments.

Too soon the instruments of music, and harmony of the voices, made me forget my Monitor, and all his reasoning: my heart, again seduced by pleasure, quickly persuaded me that such austere morality was calculated only to fill us with melancholy: I danced with some degree of elegance, and the praises bestowed upon me were excessive; in short, I returned home more enchanted than ever, with the world.

We crossed the park, which a judicious distribution of lamps had so illuminated, as to give it almost the glare of noon-day. The crowd of people about us, the variety of faces and dresses, an unrestrained festivity, which every where prevailed, all served to seduce my soul with stronger delusions. One needs no more than such a scene as this, to ruin their taste for ever. It fills the mind with the vast idea of the world and its pleasures; and when once the heart has received these first impressions, it is next to impossible to efface them.

Six years passed away in a continued round of pleasure and diversion; at the end of which, I was married to your much honoured father. Some circumstances, fortunate for me, gave HIM the preference in my regard to several young noblemen, who had professed the strongest attachment to me. Had any one of THESE succeeded in his addresses, I should have been wedded to folly and repentance; it was my happier lot to be connected with discretion and politeness.

We must needs appear with eclat on our marriage, and in this respect my natural turn of mind was of great service to me; it made me as splendid as I was vain: and as our income was such as enabled me to indulge my taste for shew, I gave the reins to it without restraint. I kept a sort of court, in which I presided as a sovereign princess: my courtiers were lavish of their praises, they were suppliant for favours, and my husband and I were considered as beings superior to the rest of mankind in happiness and honours.

A war with the house of Austria deprived me of your father, for a time; he parted from me with that heroic spirit, which distinguished his character to the latest moment of his life;

while in his absence I gave myself up to sorrow and regret. His letters, however, comforted me; and no sooner was my peace of mind restored, than my taste for pleasure returned. The opera of THETIS was performed, at which I was present; and then it was that my fondness for public diversions resumed its dominion in my heart. I now put myself forward to sit in judgment on every new theatrical performance; and was the first to admire the decorations of the stage. The world is like a troubled sea, whose waves always carry us away much father than we at first intended to go.

However, notwithstanding my allowed taste for whatever might gratify the senses, or encourage vanity, I was generally considered as a pattern of prudence and discretion: people were astonished to see a young woman, only twenty years old, with no other passion than a love for dress, shew, and diversions. The world cannot conceive it possible, that while we are gliding down the stream of luxury and pleasure, we are, in the eye of reason, objects of pity.

The hints, which I had received from my friendly Monitor, whose writings I had only

cursorily dipt into, were perpetually obtruding themselves; but, like those gentle breezes, which ruffle the surface of the waters, they only served to glance upon my heart. What surprized me was, that a very discreet relation of mine, to whom I had mentioned this author, strictly forbid me looking into it. But this she did, as she many years afterwards declared, merely to excite my eagerness to read it, and attach me more strongly to my book. She well knew, that prohibition serves only to stimulate; and that to interdict, is often the surest means of fixing our affections on that which is forbidden us. Her stratagem succeeded; I was never at rest, until I became possessed of these essays, and until I had read them again and again. His reflections gave me some uneasiness; but I was so far from being amended by them, that I only compared this emotion to the transient effect of a tragical representation on the stage. I was affected for a moment, and that was all.

At length your father returned from the war, covered with wounds and laurels: the compliments which were paid to him at court, and the honours which were heaped upon him, occasioned a second diversion of my thoughts.

which plunged me deeper than ever in the gulph of dissipation.

My first study was, to be distinguished by the elegance of my entertainments; and in this I was very successful; my exquisite taste was generally admired, and every one expressed the highest satisfaction. What an encouragement was this to a woman, whose only ambition was to shine in her sphere, to please and be applauded! You will not wonder that our expenses were excessive; and that, to support our vanity, we diminished our substance, and consequently your inheritance.

You see, my dear children, that I lay open to you, without reserve, all the circumstances of my life; and that my language is that of one, whose heart dictates nothing but tenderness and sincerity. Where my conduct has been faulty, you will, I am sure, be the first to forgive: it may, perhaps, prove a fortunate circumstance for YOU, that I, who have been first seduced into the ways of vanity and folly, am the better enabled to point out to you that path, which it will be your wisdom and happiness to pursue.

Certain it is, that this abridgment of our fortune wrought some change in my manner

of life: your father again left me in obedience to the orders of the court, which sent him into Italy; and I endeavoured to amuse myself in his absence by reading our best historians.

There, with delight, I found the name which you bear, mentioned with honour in the French and English history; there I saw those virtues displayed by your ancestors, which I hope it will be the study of your lives to imitate.

About this time, my friendship commenced with the Countess of S——, an excellent lady, of whom the hand of death has lately deprived the world; in which she seemed to live for no other purpose, than to do good. Her conversation charmed me; her prudence delighted me; there was no opportunity of instruction, which she did not improve; and this she did with so much ease and affability, and in a manner so natural and agreeable, that the most inconsiderate could not but attend to her: she often urged to me the necessity of uniting in the same character the Philosopher and the Christian. Here I must acknowledge, not without taking shame to myself, that the pleasures of the world left me nothing more than

a fruitless desire of being what I ought to be. It was continually interposing itself between the conviction of my judgment, and the propensities of my will, until my mind was utterly distracted; I would and would not; and my existence was nothing more than a life perpetually interrupted with doubt and perplexity.

In this strange situation did your father find me at his return. The King received him with that gracious air, which often serves instead of more substantial favours; and which is in fact equivalent to a recompence. Every one partook of my joy; and dragged me out, as it were in spite of myself, into the midst of pleasures and diversions. Paris and Versailles, each in its turn, beheld me wholly engaged in doing honour to my husband on account of his good fortune. Pleasure and ambition are cruel tyrants; they leave us not a moment to ourselves; and when they have filled us with hope, they almost always abandon us to disappointment.

Your father, though much engaged in the business of the world, had his intervals of solitude and retirement; he sometimes pleaded indisposition, that he might apply himselfe to

the study of his profession; and, as I imagined, to amuse himself by a change of employment. He found, that the world has every thing that is good in it—except true wisdom.

The restless spirit of mankind renewed the war; and again obliged me to live in a state of separation from a husband, who was dearer to me than myself. His valour, which rendered him insensible of danger, procured him at the same time the honour—of being grievously wounded, and of being made a Lieutenant-General. Joy and solicitude by turns took possession of my heart; and in this anxious state I continued, until I was fully assured of his perfect recovery.

This advancement of my husband revived my passion for the vanities of the world. I now again found myself inclined to taste largely of the pleasures of the court. I hired one house at Versailles, and another at Fontainbleau; and my taste for luxury, together with my natural vanity, led me to fit them up in the most expensive manner. I piqued myself on having more elegant furniture than any woman of my rank, and on having my table more sumptuously supplied. I became proverbial for the magnificence of my entertainments;

and happy was the man, who could be present at them. Persons of fashion assembled at my house with eagerness; and each endeavoured to distinguish himself by the utmost exertion of pleasantry and humour.

I never found myself so far removed from wisdom, as when I was surrounded by the most celebrated wits. I heard nothing from them but sallies of mirth, which interrupted all serious thoughts; and such flighty conversation, as served only to stifle reflection. Our decisions were peremptory on every subject, and were wholly influenced by fashion and by prejudice.

Thus was my mind entirely taken up in the pursuit of folly; instead of being employed, as it ought to have been, in attending to your education.

The prevalence of custom, my dear children, had taught me to think, that I ought not to have you with me more than a few days in a year; with which custom I could not comply, without doing violence to my tenderness and affection for you. Instead of endeavouring to inform myself, what school was under the best and wisest regulation, my inquiry was, which was the most genteel; and I was much

more desirous, that you should form honourable connexions, than that you should receive good instructions: thus did I secretly encourage your vanity, while your improvement ought to have been my principal care. When we cannot amend our faults, the least we can do is to acknowledge them: and do not think that I offer any violence to myself in thus confessing my folly, and indiscretion: it is my greatest comfort, that I am giving you this surest evidence of my repentance. If my affection for you were less than it is, I should speak to you with less sincerity; it is the compunction I feel, for having listened more attentively to the voice of custom than to that of my duty, which extorts from me this undisguised profession of my misconduct; in short, my extreme solicitude for you, banishes every selfish consideration from my mind.

The conduct of your father distinguished him now more than ever. He was deservedly esteemed a most accomplished soldier; insomuch that I dare venture to assert, without fearing the imputation of partiality or ostentation, that the dignity of Field-Marshal, to which he was advanced, was no more than a distinction due to his superior merit as an offi-

cer. He saw himself elevated to the highest point of honour in his profession; at a time of life, wherein he was very capable of enjoying the fruits of his promotion; being at that time not fifty years old.

I was too fond of gaiety and pleasure, not to surpass on this occasion all my former instances of luxury and expence. Balls, illuminations and entertainments of every kind, conspired to celebrate that happy event, which filled my heart with joy; and nothing was now to be seen around me, but trophies erected to my vanity: I was wholly taken up in going from one circle to another, eager to receive congratulation and applause from every quarter. But how inconstant is all earthly glory! alas! your father died within three years after his promotion to the honour of a Marshal: and my heart, overpowered by this dreadful stroke, seemed to go down with him even into the grave. He died like a Christian Philosopher; full of loyalty to his King, full of tenderness for his wife and children; and most earnestly desiring to be admitted into the presence of God. He would have been better pleased, had his last breath been drawn in the service of his country; and had he been per-

mitted to make compensation with his life, for the honours which his sovereign had heaped upon him.

The first year of my widowhood was wholly given up to the effusions of grief; to an utter disrelish for every kind of satisfaction, and to an entire indifference about myself and every thing around me. I thought of nothing but a most affectionate husband, who was now no more; and this sad idea served only to fill my soul with the most melancholy reflections.

I could then have readily answered for myself, that the world would never more take possession of my heart. But the world is not content with being a MASTER only: it is a TYRANT, which holds its vassals in fetters of iron; from which in vain I endeavoured to release myself: my former habits resumed their empire in my heart; and though I did not forget my husband, I forgot all my resolutions. I now appeared a fashionable widow; wholly taken up by the pleasures of the world, and all its vanities. My greatest comfort in this moment of reflection is, that I never could be prevailed with to listen to any proposals of a second marriage. I had too much respect for the memory of your father, ever to consent

to lose his name; and I had too much regard for you his children, ever to endanger your welfare and happiness by such a step. This double attachment was superior to every other consideration; I felt myself altogether devoted to my children; whom I feared might be less the objects of my attention, if I transferred my affections to any other: this single circumstance was sufficient to determine me. Heaven grant, that you may make me the best return for this sacrifice, not merely by your thanks, but by the tenderest regard for my happiness. I have not a more sincere wish, than to excite your affection; and as I am truly sensible of the full extent of my own, no one surely can blame me for earnestly desiring, that our love for each other should be reciprocal.

Were I so unhappy as to discover in either of you an abatement of affection towards me; I should remind you, that there is not one of you, whose birth was not almost the occasion of my death; and that the more I suffered in bringing you into the world, the more closely is my heart attached to you: This only knows to what degree you have hitherto engaged its affections; and I can truly say, that, amid the

dissipation of a life of pleasure, I never felt any real satisfaction but in seeing you thus sitting round me. Happy moment! the only one which can afford me a gleam of consolation for a loss, which I can never cease to lament.

But, to return to the world; which continually enslaved my affections, and which, whilst I was engaged in the gratification of my passion for pleasure, suffered me not to rest, day or night. I had sacrificed to it the best moments of my life; the hours destined to calm repose were devoted to it; and, on the return of every day, fresh snares were laid for me; and new temptations offered to engage me in its service. I found myself absolutely subject to its caprice; I was present at every public assembly; I had a high opinion of its extravagancies; I studied all its refinements; I commended only what the world approved; I rejected only what the world condemned: I was, in short, as much a slave to its commands, as one who has no power to move or act, without permission from his master.

Sometimes, quite wearied with its importunity, I wished to shake off the yoke; and to

enter into a serious examination of my heart: of which it had too long maintained an entire disposal; but such transient inclinations only served to convince me of my weakness. This sufficiently appeared, when after some days of strict retirement, which should have been the commencement of a new life, a slight invitation called me forth again, to put myself under the power of my tyrant; and made me foolishly repent of having ever wished to withdraw myself from his dominion.

In the mean time I began to perceive that the Spring of my life was passed and gone; and that it was time to break the charm, which thus seduced me: however, the lot was cast, and rather than have recourse to reason, I employed every artifice to supply the deficiency of blooming youth. Thus did I at once endeavour to impose on others, and delude myself; and nothing but the astonishing incident which I am going to relate, was capable of overcoming this dangerous illusion.

Having been informed that a new play was to be acted, I engaged to go with a party of friends to the theatre, and among the rest, with Lady ——, whom I loved

with the tenderest affection. At the appointed hour, I called at the door of my friend. Surprised, at my arrival, not to find any of the servants ready to receive me, I immediately ran up into her bed-chamber; I went to her, and saluting her, I asked her the reason why she was not ready to go with me; O! Heavens! She was dead! her countenance still retained its beauty; her flesh was yet warm, but her body was motionless and lifeless! Having shrieked so loud as to fill the whole house with my cries, I fell into a swoon, which lasted above an hour and a half. The domestics, who in their consternation had fled different ways, reassembled at the noise of my cries; and used every possible endeavour to bring me to my senses. After which, they informed me, that their mistress was just dead of a quinsey, that had choaked her. Conceive, if you can, the horrors of my situation; I was almost suffocated with grief, which laboured to express itself; and in the utmost terror and amazement, I withdrew from this scene.

By this method it seemed that Heaven thought fit to act upon my mind, to dissipate imposture and delusion. I returned to my

house, wherein I saw nothing but emblems of pride and vanity. I now discovered for the first time, that those specious charms, with which the world had so long deceived me, were in reality no better than splendid miseries. I now reflected, that I had been only a dupe to my own pride, and the fashions of the world: that I had been running after a phantom of happiness, which had escaped me; that human life was most uncertain in its tenure; in short, that my essayest, who had distressed me, had told me the truth; and that one must be absolutely blind, not to see the force of his arguments.

As I had learnt from experience to distrust my own weakness, I felt no inclination to make a public profession of my change of sentiments; especially, as I knew that it is not easy to support a consistency of character in extremes; that too great zeal is seldom lasting, and almost always indiscreet, and that to discharge the duties of Christianity, it was sufficient to be—a Christian.

However, I insensibly withdrew myself from the world and its pleasures; and under a pretence of taking care of my health, as my constitution had been always delicate, I began

you a circumstance, which cannot but affect you in the strongest manner. I have always kept it treasured up in my breast, as a valuable deposit, which I intended some time or other to produce, whenever you should be enabled to judge of its value and importance.

I call Heaven to witness, that neither business nor pleasure has ever been able to efface the remembrance of your father; on the contrary, he is always present in my mind; and indeed it is this lively representation of him, which alone enables me to support his loss. Without this painful resource, my mind would have absolutely sunk beneath the burden of my grief.

But now the hour approaches when I shall be re-united to the tenderest of husbands; when our ashes, mixed together, shall teach you, my dear children, the instability of every earthly possession, and the wisdom of despising the momentary vanities of life, when brought into comparison with the treasures of an immortal state.

It is by such reflections as these, that order and regularity are best preserved in our minds; and that we are taught the necessity of doing

nothing contrary to the rules of prudence and discretion.

This practice is so essential to our happiness, and so conformable to the designs of our Creator, that it cannot be neglected without a violation of the laws of GOD.

"It is this regard to duty and propriety, by which peace is preserved in kingdoms, and union in families: it is this which regulates the conduct of the servant towards his master, and the subject towards his prince; it is this which engages my love towards you, and your respect towards me: it is this which makes *you* studious to mitigate my sorrows, and *me* incessantly solicitous to advance your happiness. It is this regularity of conduct which makes us good parents, good friends, and good citizens; which gives us a right judgment of things, and assists us both in the choice of the fittest time and the properest method of doing whatever is to be done. It is one of the greatest misfortunes in the world, to live without any stated rule of conduct, in perpetual disorder and confusion. Our life should be a transcript of the harmony of the universe; which could not subsist, much less attract our admiration, were it not for that just proportion

which is discoverable in all its parts. Take away order from the world, and you reduce it to a frightful chaos; leave man without any other guide than his own passions and caprice, and there will be nothing but perpetual discord betwixt his judgment and his will.

Ruin ensues, when a man exhibits in his own ill-governed mind the miseries of anarchy; his ideas are confused; his imagination is bewildered; his conscience is misled; his reason is obscured; and his soul becomes the seat of confusion and irregularity.

If you do not accustom yourselves, at your first setting out in life, to lay down some regular plan of conduct, you will never attain to that rectitude of judgment, which estimates things according to their worth, and which, in the midst of errors and prejudices, will enable you to give the preference to truth.

Your father's inclinations were so wisely regulated, that his behaviour was always influenced by a strict regard to propriety: he knew, with the philosopher, that we ought to weigh the motives of our conduct; and every evening to enter into an examination of our actions.

The man who lives at random, is a slave to his own whims and caprice. The world rep-

robates such an one as a monster which disturbes its harmony; and society rejects him as a being incapable of friendship. We see, in short, that whoever is thus irregular in his own mind, is destitute of every quality which can contribute to the ornament or benefit of human life: his manners are disgusting, his expences are excessive, and his whole conduct unaccountable.

Do not think that I am carried away by my imagination beyond the truth; which I shall always strictly observe in conversing with you. The too sad experience of many confirms what I say; and it may serve to teach you that it is impossible rightly to manage your affairs, or discharge your duty without a proper command of your mind and passions; every movement of which should be as nicely regulated as those of a well finished clock.

The exact proportion observable in every work of God, is intended to teach us, that order is the greatest beauty in nature; and that to despise this, is to counteract one of the greatest laws of the Creator of the universe. Endeavour then, I beseech you, to imitate in your behaviour that general harmony in the creation, which, in the course of every

year, supplies us with whatever is either agreeable or useful: let your studies be methodical, all conducted rather with a view to instruction, than mere amusement. If you read without a plan, you will overload your memory without improving it; and your knowledge will be little better than an indigested chaos.

The mind in which disorder prevails, is, in the eye of reason, like a city wihtout government, or, a house without unanimity. But a person of this disposition deceives himself; and fancies, that if he keep clear of those irregularities which are offensive to society, he may make himself easy, though he has all the reason in the world to be dissatisfied with his way of life.

You will find many who seem to delight in nothing but irregularity; who go to rest when others rise; who eat when others fast; who stay at home when others go to church; in short, whose chief employment seems to be to break through every rule, without the least regard to method in any part of their conduct.

Alas! when I was one of these fashionable ladies, whose gaiety was an object of envy, I confounded night with day, I knew no law but my own whim; I had no time but for

pleasure, no plan but to avoid every thing that was like regularity.

Be assured, that there is nothing so bewildered, as the life of a person, given up to the hurry and tumult of the world; such a one has no sense of the value of time; she knows no distinction of days, and pays no regard to duty; she studies fashions, and is wholly taken up with trifles; she delights in that which debases the mind, and is contrary to reason; she is perpetually seeking happiness where it is not to be found; and, though wearied with the pursuit, renews it every day.

The world is full of persons always engaged in new projects, and distracted with new desires; who die without reflection, because they have lived without any knowledge of themselves. When the mind is thus disordered, it is afraid to look into itself; or if it ventures to examine things at all, it only does it superficially. The senses are so many tyrants, from whose power we are unable to deliver ourselves; and nothing appears really valuable, which does not administer to their gratification.

Maintain then the dominion over your own minds, that you be not overcome by those pas-

sions, which will lay siege to your virtue; your thoughts will then be regulated by wisdom, and you will be raised above those clouds which obscure the light of the understanding. Each of us may be considered as an epitome of the world, which is subject to eclipses, changes of weather, storms and tempests. We all observe the strange revolutions which happen in the universe; but as Providence, in the midst of such a multitude of created beings, preserves the utmost harmony, both in heaven and earth, so ought reason to preserve in the human mind the strictest attention to order and peace. Without this we degrade ourselves below the meanest insect, or even the inanimate parts of creation; which only subsist to answer the purposes for which they were made. Behold the bee or the ant; a thousand times wiser, each of them, than the man who despises them. These never deviate from the laws of their nature, nor from the course which Providence has assigned them: it is only by an imitation of their conduct and foresight, that families are maintained, and kingdoms preserve their power and splendor.

This may serve to convince you, that what-

ever state of life you are placed in, it will always be full of disquiet, if your judgment and your passions are at variance with each other: you must therefore frequently examine into the springs and motives of your conduct, in order to regulate your affections. You will then see, as in a picture, the tendency of your actions; and will soon be enabled to rectify whatever is amiss in you.

When a house is on fire, with what eagerness do we hasten to put it out! And shall we suffer our passions to burn with fury, in the midst of us, without giving ourselves the least trouble to extinguish the flame? We seldom reflect that the mind is a kingdom, which cannot be well governed, without a constant care as well to defend it from its enemies, as to promote whatever may tend to the establishment of peace and tranquillity. Consider the stars, which shine in their courses over our heads; consider the elements which are the source of life and respiration: alas! what monitors are these to man, to be always ready like them to execute the commands of God! This view of the creation perpetually reminds us that every rational creature also ought to move in his proper sphere, and dis-

charge his appointed duty. When we only act as we are influenced by a capricious humour, we insult the wisdom of a God of order, and raise a perpetual tumult in our own breasts.

I have always observed, that persons of a dissipated turn are as much disordered with respect to their affairs, as they are unsettled in their own minds; and leave no inheritance to their children, but debts and law-suits. There is an easy kind of arithmetic, which every lover of method is acquainted with; and which consists in computing our obligations and our necessities, and our ability to answer both, in order to keep ourselves within due bounds, and to pay a proper regard to that which may reasonably be expected from us. If you have not this love of method which I wish to recommend, you will never be able to regulate your actions, or your families, or your own minds. You will either behave with too great haughtiness, or with too great familiarity towards your domestics; you will not distinguish what is superfluous from what is necessary; and for want of calculation, you will have nothing but creditors, or debtors who have nothing to pay.

You are born, my children, to a considerable fortune; but what will become of it, if its use be not regulated by economy? Riches are absolute ruin to a dissipated owner: the same confusion which distracts his mind, produces an inconsistency in all his actions; one while you see an astonishing prodigality; at another time you are shocked with as unreasonable avarice. He can throw away money, but he cannot give it: he sacrifices every thing to pleasure or to pride; but nothing to justice.

When you are confirmed in this wise habit of acting methodically, every part of your conduct will be happily adjusted: you will set apart proper seasons for study and for recreation; you will manage your time and your income with prudence; you will distribute exact justice to your neighbours, and you will never engage in any important enterprize, without *considering the end.* Nothing will ever make you forget the duties which you owe to your character and station; no day will pass in which you will not remember your duty to God. We never lose sight of these duties but when we give the preference to a life of irregularity; when we go on without a single thought what we are, and what will become

of us; hence it is, that the affections of disorderly persons differ very little from the propensities of the brute creation.

Your good dispositions encourage me to hope that my advice will sink deep into your hearts. Remember always that it is the counsel of a mother, who would gladly sacrifice her life to purchase your happiness; and of a friend, whose heart is bound up with yours, and who would not wish to live a moment but in the most intimate connection with you. All the faults of my life have been offences against ORDER, which can never be absolutely neglected, without frustrating the end of our creation; for GOD hath doubtless made us for this purpose, that we might moderate our desires, and keep our passions within proper bounds.

But if your intentions are good, as I trust they are, enough has been said on this subject; besides, my want of strength reminds me that it is time to relieve myself, and dismiss you for the present.

CONFERENCE III.

ON TRUE PATRIOTISM.

I DESIGN that the duties which you owe your country, shall be the subject of this days instructions; but as this is above my ability properly to handle, your father shall speak, instead of me. A little before his death, he left me these reflections, desiring me to communicate them to you, when you were of a proper age to receive benefit from them. Read them, therefore; and let us listen to them with great attention.

The eldest son received the manuscript from his mother, and thus began——

"Providence, which directs the place of your birth, as well as every other circumstance of it, has ordained that the country in which we were born, should be dearer to us than any other; and that we may not have the least doubt of the truth of it, this sentiment is so universally impressed on our minds, that there is not, a man upon earth, who is not naturally a PATRIOT. The whole world may be considered as one great family; but the alliance is much stricter betwixt those who serve the

same master, and are subject to the same laws. They have all one common interest; good and evil are indiscriminately dispensed; and each partakes more or less of the prosperity or misfortunes of the state.

"Though you owe the tenderest affection to your mother, you must never forget that much is also due to the country which gave you birth; and which considers you as its children, and its subjects: you must divide betwixt them those sentiments of love and respect, which nature has implanted in your hearts. Nay, I will venture to say, however jealous I may be of my rights, as your father, that you ought not to hesitate in a case of necessity, whether you should leave me or not, when your country demands your assistance. Then it is, that, with the heroic self-denial of a Roman, you must sacrifice every other consideration, and postpone every other interest to the duty which you owe to your country.

"The first character you sustained, was that of citizens: the state then recognized you as subjects, intimately connected with it. Religion adopts the same language with reason; she will teach you that your industry and abilities ought to be united in the service of

your country; and that it is an absolute robbery to deprive her of this assistance. She has a right to demand an account of our engagements, and to expect the application of our talents to her advantage. They, therefore, who only employ themselves in the gratification of their own vanity, or who lie down in a state of torpid indolence, can only be considered as burthens to the state; or as wasps which come to devour the labour of the bees.

"We are much mistaken, if we imagine ourselves at liberty to engage in those studies and employments alone, which are most pleasing to ourselves; the pursuits of one who wishes to be called a patriot, ought to be directed only by the love of his country, and an earnest desire to promote her welfare. What would be the state of that kingdom, in which every one, being master of his own actions, should do just what he pleases; and employ all his powers of mind and body, only in the gratification of his own fancy? A cheerful submission to our governours, and a readiness to stand forth in our country's cause, give us the truest picture of a well ordered and happy government.

"You, who are already engaged in the pub-

lic service, ought to be more sensible of this than any others; you are invested with honours and advantages, only on condition that you be always ready to assist your country. Woe be to you, if ever ye forget, that the very blood which runs through your veins must be dedicated to her; that she has as much right to dispose of your life, as you have to dispose of your fortune; and that you are no longer worthy to live, than while you maintain the character of good subjects.

"History, sacred and prophane, is full of examples of persons ready to sacrifice their lives for their country's good; even women, forgetting the weakness of their sex, have become heroines when the public welfare demanded their assistance"——Here the generous mother, carried beyond herself, in a kind of rapture, interrupted her son.

"*Indeed, my children, I firmly believe this female heroism to be very attainable. I myself actually feel resolution enough, notwithstanding my bodily infirmities, to carry me even to the mouth of a cannon; and encourage you by my exhortations to choose an honourable death, if my duty rendered such a trial necessary. reason, in that case would*

make me altogether regardless of myself. The consideration that I had brought such worthy children into the world, would dry up my tears; and render me rather an object of envy than of pity, in the sight of my sovereign and my country".——*But go on.*

" The enjoyment of life is by no means equivalent to the honour of dying in a good cause, for our country: for life is but a shadow; whereas the honour which accrues from such a death, is a light which survives the obscurity of time. You find that MARCELLUS and many other heroes are still remembered, as if they were but just dead.

" It is not enough, my children, to wear the livery of men of value; to live in a corps, whose examples encourage bravery: fortitude must be engrafted in the heart; and it must be so disinterested, as neither to be influenced by eye-witnesses, nor by the prospect of reward.

" Examine yourselves on this head; and if your sensations unfortunately contradict your profession, take shame to yourselves, and know that you are no better than hypocrites, as to personal courage. It is the inward motive, not the outward appearance,

which stamps a value upon actions: if in taking up arms we have more regard to our own interest, than to that of our country, and if, under a pretence of defending the rights of our God and country, we think only of enriching ourselves, we only wear the habit, without having any portion of the spirit of a soldier. Many indeed have been found acting only under the influence of avarice and pride, at the very time that they signalized themselves externally by the most specious conduct. But the true soldier desires no other recompence, than the pleasure of doing his duty; no other witness than his own conscience; he is just as ready to die in a crowd, wherein he will be mixed with the multitude, as to fall, distinguished in a single combat.

"This confidence is the effect of Religion; which purifies the intentions, and influences the will, and is the school of true magnanimity: without the motives which religion offers, nothing is to be seen but the shadow of virtue. Whoever is actuated by self-interest, should take care to conceal the principle on which he is acting: for the world, corrupt as it is, is not yet accustomed to applaud those actions

which have no better principle than pride and covetousnes.

" You are descended from a line of ancestors whom your country ranks in the number of her heroes. With the price of their blood they purchased those honours which you inherit; and of which you then only properly avail yourselves, when you imitate their virtues. Nobility is lost in the eye of reason and integrity, when it only serves to encourage us in pride and luxury, and gives us an air of arrogance and disdain.

" It is a certain indication of a weak and ungenerous mind, to imagine that a title gives us a right to despise the rest of mankind, and to do whatever our passions may suggest to us. Nobility is at once both a recompence for past services done to our country, and an engagement by which the party so distinguished, binds himself to excel, not less in the dignity of his sentiments, and the superiority of his virtues, than in his rank and situation in the world.

" You can never therefore properly reflect on your noble birth, without being touched with a sense of the duties which it requires of you. If your country gives you credit on

good sense, that we are insulted by filthy jests; and the palm of wit is assigned to those who ridicule religion and its ministers: such company as this you ought never to be made acquainted with; true merit seeks a more advantageous residence, than in such society. Whatever respect you may think due to the different kinds of people with whom you associate; take care that you purchase not the company of others at too dear a price. They have never rightly estimated what is due to social life; who sacrifice their time, their liberty, and their virtue to it.

Such as divide their whole time betwixt dress and amusements, are a sort of beings which merely exist; and who, under a pretence of rendering themselves useful to the public, only think of gratifying their pride and dissipating chagrin. It is impossible to be at rest in our own minds, when we give ourselves up to the hurry of the world; private friendship must not be supported at our country's expence: to the latter we owe much more than to the former; we must not, therefore, sacrifice the one out of too much complaisance for the other. If there are some men who do nothing, it is because they have

no proper sense of their duty to GOD, or to their country. Complaisance degenerates into weakness, when we have not resolution enough to resist the importunities of an artful woman, or the solicitations of an idle man: only make a point of being constantly well employed, and you will easily get rid of this sort of persecution.

The greatest mischief is, when we do not distinguish betwixt the fashion of the world, and the duties which we owe to society; whereas there is a wonderful difference between them. The one engages us in a train of foolish expences, vicious intrigues, and a round of unprofitable idleness; the other makes us useful and friendly, and offers to us only those amusements which are innocent and proper.

A sociable man is really a friend to his country; a man of the world (in the sense in which we have just now considered him) would sacrifice his country to his interest and his pleasures. When this attachment to the world has taken possession of the heart, its votaries only exist for the sake of gratification; and what dependence can there be on a mind that is subject to the tyranny of pleasure?

He, who attends to the duties which he owes to society, is like a stream, which diffuses itself through a beautiful meadow; but he, who gives himself up to the world, is like a torrent, which hastens to empty itself into the sea: in the one we discover nothing but delight, in the other nothing but noise and violence. The love of society constitutes a part of our duty; the love of the world makes us forgetful of every duty. I have been too well acquainted with this dangerous world; and it is because I foolishly confounded it with ideas of society, that I am at present so well able to distinguish betwixt them. Alas! I thought once, there was no being sociable, without being present at every entertainment, at every play, and at every assembly; and I had so thoroughly reconciled myself to this notion, that I should have looked upon any one, as the most stupid and unsociable of all creatures, who did not readily concur with me in my ideas. So powerful is the love of pleasure, that it puts a false interpretation upon every thing, and assumes the language of folly instead of that of reason.

This delusion, one of the strongest that can be imagined among persons of a certain rank,

makes them attach themselves to the world, without scruple or reserve: they doat upon it under the pretext of being sociable; and they persuade themselves, that the unprofitable toil, which it imposes, is a duty which is necessary for them to perform.

It is my earnest desire, that my own past imprudence should prove useful to YOU; and that you would not make society consist in any thing, but what it really is; that is to say, in a polite intercourse which unites us to each other;—in friendly visits, which cannot be dispensed with; in letters of civility, which we ought to write; and in that necessary familiarity which we mutually stand in need of for the purposes of relaxation: all beyond this deserves not the name of SOCIETY.

After determining, what it is to be really and properly sociable; it is necessary for us to know how we ought to conduct ourselves in the company of others. Many rules have been laid down upon this subject; and they are plainly reducible to these: never to speak, but to the purpose: never to rally, but with good humour: never to appear supercilious: never to indulge caprice: never to shew any thing inconsistent with a good heart. Strokes

of humour may please for a moment; but good sense is always agreeable, and always gives satisfaction: we cannot endure that which lets us down; and therefore we are much better pleased with him who only says common things, than with him whose turn of conversation is of a superior kind: nature is always preferable to art.

Learn to make use of your wit, without shewing that you are vain of it, the less you affect to shew it, the more admirers you will find, and the more friends. Equally avoid both railery and flattery; the one is always considered as ill-nature, the other passes for deceit. In former times it was necessary to praise in the most exravagant terms, in order to attract a smile, or even a gracious look: The ladies of the present age know how ridiculous such commendations are; and rather than be distinguished by flattery, they wish never to be complimented at all. If you are so happy as to have a grave and studious turn, you will find fewer of these lesser duties on your hands. All those important trifles, which the world calls little attentions (though absolutely necessary within proper limits) seem in their extreme to belong only to PETITS MAI-

TRES; because every thing, that is insignificant, is suited to that character. You are undone if ever you propose such as these for your examples. I never saw one of them whose mind was not utterly ruined by his folly: they are fit only to afford diversion, and they always do it at their own expence. When the arrival of one of these gentry is announced, only by the scent of amber and musk, and when he brings nothing with him but impertinence; it is impossible that any man of sense can be pleased with such company.

It is by good manners and a genteel air, that others are prepossessed in our favour. Every man has so much self love, as to oppose him, who wishes to trample upon those about him; we love to see the charms of sweetness in a modest countenance: while you are possessed of those graces, my children, all the world will admire you. It is not necessary, in order to be sociable, that you be eloquent, or witty, or possessed of any rare or superior talents; all that society demands of you, is, that you be complaisant without meanness, polite without flattery, steady without rudeness, and sprightly without affectation. She requires that you culti-

vate her, as the friends of mankind; and that you do her honour by an unblemished reputation, by decency in your words, and purity in your morals.

A farther knowledge of the world will teach you many particulars, on which my weakness will not suffer me to enlarge. It will furnish you with that gracefulness, that ease in your carriage, that politeness, that propriety of behaviour, which ought to distinguish a person of fashion.—It will shew you the necessity of not publishing stories without caution, of not judging of any performances but with modesty; and of not speaking of your neighbour's faults, but with reserve. It will teach you that you ought to be neither the first to set the fashion, nor the last to leave it; and in short, that you cannot too carefully avoid the imputation of needless singularity.

Be careful not to slight any person; yet let your attentions be properly regulated; nothing is more improper, than to treat a stranger with the intimacy of a friend; or an intimate friend with the distance due to a superior. Distinguish merit wherever you find it, without troubling yourself about the garb in which it appears: court the company of

the learned, and the conversation of the aged; their discourse is often more useful than any book that you can read. Never argue on a subject which you do not understand; every one admires modesty; no one can endure conceit. If you are desired to play for mere amusement, do not decline it; but never play for the sake of gain: if you are unlucky, you will lose with good humour, when the stake is a matter of indifference: he, that cannot command his temper, never fails to discover his weakness, and gives offence to every one about him. Treat the female sex with the utmost delicacy; they have a claim to the greatest attention. Avoid intrigues; have a strict regard to modesty; and you will never have a quarrel with any woman.

Never promise any thing without deliberation; but having made a promise, implicitly observe it. Whoever joins the first party that comes in his way, without regarding a prior engagement, does not deserve to have friends: let discretion constantly direct your conduct. And if, notwithstanding all the precautions, you should meet with enemies, they, and not you, will deserve blame.

The more attention you appear to shew to

these instructions, my children, the more dear you must necessarily be to me; and the less I shall lament the sad separation which death is preparing to make betwixt us. In leaving you well stored with good principles, and furnished with my best advice, I shall think I only lose you in part; and that I shall be always in some degree in the midst of you. It is thus you will be able to find me in you own minds, when you can no longer see or hear me; and I trust you will there find me faithfully represented.

CONFERENCE V.

ON VIRTUE.

A SUCCESSION of fainting fits had exceedingly weakened this pious mother; but, by an exertion worthy of her virtue, and magnanimity, she seemed to forget her bodily weakness, that she might fully express the dictates of her heart. Her children full of attention, and impressed with the utmost tenderness, looked upon her with a mixture of admiration and grief; while she communicated this valuable lesson of instruction on the subject of virtue.

Virtue, my children, ought to be the ruling principle of all your actions: I cannot but consider her as the offspring of heaven, without whom there would be nothing in this world but iniquity and impurity. In vain have the most corrupt ages of men endeavoured to obscure her brightness: she forces her way through the thickest cloud of passions, diffusing those rays of glory, which we never can sufficiently admire.—

Even her enemies are compelled to praise her; and they who themselves are wicked, if not utterly abandoned, would fain be accounted virtuous.

But it is not sufficient to bear our testimony in faviour of virtue, in empty words; we must do her honour by a conduct which is irreproachable. The eulogium, which we outwardly bestow upon her, must be confirmed by the inward dispositions of the heart.

You will never be truly great, but in proportion as you are virtuous: the highest honours are no more than the pedestal; but merit is the statue erected upon it. This it is, which distinguishes an individual from the multitude; this it is, which renders him superior to all that birth and fortune can bestow. Our

talents do us honour; and wit gains us credit: but Virtue exalts us even above humanity; raising us above the events of life, and even above ourselves. With her we secure the admiration of posterity, we live in the annals of history; we never die: without her, on the contrary, we are degraded, we grovel, we only exist, to the dishonour of humanity.

Though she has flourished above four thousand years, she has not yet grown old: we speak of her, as if the great effects of her power were manifested even to this day. The ROMANS are present with us, as though they were but just now dead; we seem as it were eye witnesses of their glory and magnanimity: so true is it that . . . . . .

Here she was obliged to break off her discourse, that she might not sink under her extreme weakness; and she had only just strength enough left to tell her children, who were melted in tears, that she must defer the remainder untill another day.

CONFERENCE. VI.

Further Instructions on the same Subject.

FOUR days had now passed, within which this excellent lady had not been able to converse with her children; but happily her sufferings abated, and she now renewed her instructions.

You see me, says she, restored to you for a little time; and it is with the greatest satisfaction I avail myself of this short respite, from the pleasing hope of rendering the few remaining hours of my life as useful to you as possible.—Virtue of which I was speaking, in my last conference with you, is of so fruitful a field, that one might compose large volumes upon this subject. O! that I were able to represent her to you surrounded with that peace which is peculiar to her; adorned with those charms which distinguish her; supported by that true greatness, which is her characteristic! You would see that she was formed to be the empress of the universe; that she alone deserves our regard; that her sublime perfections would have altars erected in every heart, if man were not a dupe to his passions:

the higher she is raised, the more modest is her deportment; the more charms she possesses, the more studious is she to conceal them.

In vain doth vice oppose her attractions, and declare open war against her: the remorse, which disturbs the soul of every sinner, comes to avenge her cause, and to teach us that there is no happiness but what is found in the possession of virtue. Attach yourselves therefore closely to HER, and you will find that the perfection of happiness consists in the enjoyment of her. I never knew what real pleasure was, till I became acquainted with the worth of virtue, and the greatness of her beauty. As a proof of this, my dear children, I can with truth assure you, that notwithstanding I am on all sides surrounded with the shadow of death, I feel an inward joy which I am not able to express. This is the present happy effect of my love for virtue; which has taken such possession of my heart, that nothing can materially affect me, which hath not some relation to HER: even you are only so far dear to me, as I trust you will prove really good and virtuous.

This disposition, however, is the gift of

God, and cannot be derived from ourselves alone; it is therefore the subject of my constant prayers, that you may be filled with that grace, which I have so often and so earnestly implored for myself. No one will be richer than you, if you are in possession of this treasure; you can then be placed in no situation of life, in which you will not distinguish yourselves by some laudable action. In each of you the indigent will find a beneficent father; your family an equitable and kind master; your relations, an affectionate and generous friend; your country, a zealous supporter, a most faithful suject: in short, all men will consider you as their brethren, who only live to comfort and assist them.

What a blessing will riches and honours prove in your hands, if you are really virtuous! You will then become a source of comfort, perpetually flowing to communicate happiness to all mankind.

Your favour will be implored, as though ye were, in some degree, the ministers of heaven; and men will bless you, as doing honour to the age and nation in which you live.

Virtue is far from being unrewarded even in this life. What a satisfaction do we feel, in awaking from sleep, that we have it in our

will, and in our power to distinguish the approaching day by some act of mercy to the wretched! How are we delighted with such sentiments as these! What transport doth the combination of such virtues afford! These are the never-failing attendants on good men.

You must however beware of confounding natural disposition with the dictates of virtue; we often mistake constitutional firmness for heroic magnanimity: vivacity of temper produces courage, as phlegm occasions prudence. We can only know, by a strict inquiry into ourselves, the true motive on which we act. If it be really virtue which excites us, there will be neither affectation, nor severity: simplicity and moderation will every where appear. They who carry things to an extreme, know not, that even wisdom itself must be tempered with sobriety.

I am not fond of those outrageous virtues, which certain enthusiasts recommend as the characteristics of human perfection. True virtue only shews herself by a most obliging deportment; the more gracious her air is, the more strongly she engages our attachment: we are offended at the sight of a countenance which is overspread with a cloud of severity.

Take care then to exhibit nothing in your outward behaviour but what is truly amiable; for otherwise you will disfigure virtue, and make her appear different from what she really is: all, that we add of our own, is only an alloy unworthy of her purity. It is our misfortune that there is too great a want of sincerity among us: accustomed from our infancy to dissemble, we think nothing excellent but what is disguised; whereas there is no virtue where there is no truth.

Lay this down as a maxim, and you will detest every species of dissimulation; there is nothing more odious than a mind enslaved to falsehood, an heart in which duplicity prevails. It is better to speak truth, though it should prove to our own hurt, than to make use of the least equivocation to gain the greatest advantage.

All the riches in the world are not worth one single virtue: so that if you were allowed to make your choice betwixt the wealth which you are to be possessed of, and the virtues which I have recommended to you to practice, you ought not to hesitate a moment, which of these you should prefer. A man, who is truly virtuous, can never be really

wretched. He finds in himself those rich resources, which even princes are unable to bestow: always patient and resigned, he does not find his mind agitated with the vicissitudes of fortune. His thoughts are raised above the sufferings of the present life, to the joys of a much happier state; the sublimity of his sentiments renders him superior to all the calamities which fortune can inflict.

A soul, in which virtue resides, is the nearest representation of heaven itself: all is serenity, and light, and joy: the troubles of the world cannot interrupt its repose; the cloud of passions cannot diminish its brightness.

Religion is the only solid foundation of morality: this wisdom is the chief ornament of the human mind, and the chief director of our life. Without this, the heart is degraded, the whole soul is degenerate; we are dissatisfied with ourselves, and we have only fools or libertines for our companions and friends.

Ask any man who has preferred a vicious to a virtuous course of life; and, if he be sincere, he will acknowledge that his uneasiness was continual; that his joy was merely external; that his imagination was bewildered; that his passions consumed him; that his ac-

tions brutalized him; and that his whole mind and body were exhausted.

We need not wait for the coming of that awful day, when God shall punish vice, to know how odious she is: even in this life she carries with her her own condemnation. Her most eloquent and bold panegyrists have never been able, with all their endeavours, to cover that deformity which attends her, and always renders her the object of detestation. Go into any country that you please, and you will find vice proscribed, and virtue honoured.

In what ignominious terms doth history make mention of vicious princes! It speaks of them with horror; and never so much as names them but to make them odious to every age and nation.

A vicious man is a stranger to prudence, decency, and honesty; he neither reads, nor speaks, nor acts, but with a view to gratify the violence of his passions, and bitterly to inveigh against virtue, which excites his indignation so much the more, as he finds it impossible to hate her.

I would not wish for more than the mere presence of a libertine, to fill any reflecting mind with horror. He is a monster that de-

stroys all the pleasure of society; that stifles every worthy sentiment; that rebels against every law of reason; and that defies Heaven itself with a shocking and intollerable insolence.

From such dreadful excesses as these, Virtue, my dear children, will preserve you: It will not only remove you at a distance from every sinful act, but also from every occasion of sinning. It will inspire you with an utter aversion to those presumptuous offenders, whose very breath is infectious; it will encourage you to your several duties; it will prove the best security against idleness, which is justly esteemed the parent of every kind of wickedness.

There is no circumstance of life wherein virtue will not be found useful; as there is none in which vice can be excused. This religious principle will make us patient in adversity; humble in prosperity; prudent in business; moderate in pleasures; undaunted in dangers; affable in conversation; judicious in the management of our domestic concerns. A man is always acting amiss when he is not virtuous; his conduct is a satire against himself; and he finds only mean and base

minds that will venture to applaud him. While we practice virtue, we belong, as it were, to Heaven; while we lead a disorderly life, we are retained in the service of our passions. The observance of our duty unites us with good men; the love of vice throws us into the company of the wicked.

The world will not fail to throw abundance of obstacles in your way, to hinder your approach to virtue; but these difficulties will presently vanish, whenever you enter into an examination of your own hearts: You will then find that it is impossible to be truly good, without all those qualities which religion demands; you will then find that the inconstancy of the human mind has need to be fixed by the authority of wisdom and justice.

The vivacity of youth is too apt to form a false idea of religion, as throwing a veil of melancholy over the world and all its pleasures. But such young people are greatly mistaken: Wisdom and goodness are very consistent with, if they are not indeed the only source of Cheerfulness. If you look into the world, and attend carefully to the actions of men, you will find true enjoyment only among those who are really virtuous: Others indeed

may appear with more noisy jollity at them ; but this is only a kind of intempe excess, which, in a few moments, will place to an insupportable melancholy. W a man is only joyous by fits and by com sion, the heart remains a prey to dissipa and remorse.

If what I have said to you in recomm dation of virtue is not sufficient to detern you in favour of her charms, recal to y minds your excellent father; review the tory of your illustrious ancestors! and by means dishonour their memory by a con so widely different from theirs. The life w you derive from them, should pass as in rupt as theirs: you ought to bear their na only that you may shew to posterity, that are so many living representatives of t virtues.

I flatter myself, my admonitions will easily be effaced; and that you will st that moderation in all things which constit true wisdom. Your minds will never be t great, except whilst being steady with boldness, prudent without avarice, lib without profession, you ennoble every ac of your lives. Take heed that you do

even in secret, divest yourselves of that prudence and caution which you outwardly profess; you must never forget, that you ought to be virtuous for the sake of virtue, and for the sake of Heaven. A truly good man is he who acts as if his whole conduct were open to the sight and examination of God and men.

CONFERENCE VII.

ON PLEASURE.

AS GOD, my dear children, is pleased to prolong my life, and to enable me to continue my instructions to you, I shall take this opportunity of dwelling more at large on the subject of Pleasure; the chief rock against which you are in danger of splitting. Youth is the season in which pleasures present themselves to the imagination to seduce and captivate it. They begin by dazzling our sight; and when once they have succeeded in this point, they soon assume the empire of the heart: There they establish their dominion, and choke every seed of virtue.

As soon as the inordinate love of pleasure takes possession of the soul, virtue is obliged to retire; we are thenceforth wholly taken up with such objects as gratify the passions, cherish effeminacy, and support vanity: we seek for nothing but mischievous indulgencies, we listen only to the dictates of our sensual appetites.

There is no man who is not fond of ease and tranquillity: This principle is so deeply imprinted in our minds, that we must divest ourselves of our nature, before we can think otherwise. But by TRANQUILLITY OF MIND, I mean that pure satisfaction, which has nothing in common with those gratifications, in which the world chiefly delights: for you cannot be too often told, that the pleasures which it pursues, as its sovereign good, are only phantoms which mislead us.

I am no stranger to these boasted delights: I have been sufficiently engaged in their vain pursuit; and from my own experience I can with truth declare, that they only serve to lull reason to sleep. It is, in short, a state of stupefaction, which terminates in remorse; a dream, from which when we awake, we find a VACUUM, which we are not able to supply.

I always fancied that they would fill my heart with the most perfect joy; and I found myself constantly disappointed.

Though the soul drink ever so largely of this cup, it never finds that inward satisfaction, which leaves nothing further to be desired: we never can be completely happy, whilst we are under the government of our passions.

If I had time and ability to analize those pleasures to which the world is enslaved, I could demonstrate to you the insufficiency of public diversions and amusements, to give real satisfaction to a rational mind. It is sufficient to know that they are trifling, that they are fatiguing, that they are transient; whereas the soul can find no real happiness in that which is not substantial, peaceful, and unchangeable. We always, therefore, offer violence to our better part, when we launch forth into that tumultuous ocean of trifles, which constitutes the life of people of fashion. It is only by stifling reflection, that the lovers of pleasure can support themselves: they well know that a little serious consideration would give them a distaste for the pleasures which they are pursuing, and therefore they do every thing they can to get rid of it. Thus do they

live in a wilful ignorance even of their own minds.

How often does the theatre, which we are fond of calling the school of true politeness and just sentiments, carry us away from ourselves, and render us the slaves of passion! it is generally Love, which performs the principal character, and which is represented in the most alluring manner: we seldom attend, I believe, to what is passing there, without returning, more enamoured with the world, more passionately fond of dress, more strongly inclined to dissipation.—The glaring appearance of the stage, the sentiments there delivered, and the objects exhibited, all serve to enchant the senses, excite the passions, intoxicate the mind, and encourage the love of pleasure.

Think not, I assume the language of a preacher; mine is only that of reason and experience. The theatre is very frequently the ruin of young men, whom the sight of an actress seduces, and carries headlong into every species of mischief. From that moment, all domestic attachments are at an end; all relative duties are neglected; a total disorder in their affairs succeeds; and they become the

subjects of public conversation, and the authors of ruin to themselves and to their families.

I defy the advocates for these entertainments to deny the facts just mentioned. Alas! what I have said is too frequently verified, to question the truth of it. In vain are we told, that the tears which we shed in the theatre, teach us to be compassionate; the momentary tenderness, excited by romance, seldom, if ever materially affects the heart. Some who are just come from a scene, at which they were almost dissolved into tears, could with dry eyes behold the wretch, who, in want of every comfort, implores their pity and relief.

Assemblies have so often proved the occasions of intrigues and duels, that I cannot venture to recommend them to you. It is certainly very proper that a young man of fashion should know how to introduce himself at such places; and that he should be able to dance gracefully. But it is also very necessary that he should know, that of all qualifications, dancing is the least considerable: that a man of science looks on it with an eye of piety; and that an officer ought neither too curiously to study it, nor too earnestly engage in it: it is

the property of persons of a trifling character to be wholly occupied by trifles.

As to play—there is no species of it which does not stand in need of some apology to excuse it. At best, it shews a feebleness of mind which is incapable of proper application; and occasions a loss of time which it is impossible to redeem: you must never consider it but as a recreation, and an act of civility to society.

Of games of hazard I say nothing; they are so dangerous that I am persuaded you will most carefully avoid them: in these, men either lose their reputation, or their fortune, or both. And however rich they may suppose themselves; from the moment they commence gamesters, they can never ensure their being worth a shilling: a single throw often reduces an opulent man to absolute beggary.

I am perhaps, wrong, in reckoning play in the number of pleasures; it certainly has much more the apearance of study, than of recreation. The eye fixed, the attention engrossed, a deep silence, a restless inquietude arising from the fear of losing, or the hopes of gain, exclude the most distant idea of pleasure. This is the state of all who lose; they are full of care, they are full of complaints, they torment

themselves; and when they are seen PLAYING, to say the truth, they do every thing but PLAY.

As for feasts: they are only our ordinary meals, embellished by elegance and a variety of meats. They may serve to remind us, that this body of ours is a slave, that has a great many wants to be supplied; and that all these kinds of food, with which our vanity is fed, were originally designed merely for a remedy against death. It is a sure indication of a degenerate mind, when any man makes his happiness to consist in the pleasure of eating.

Do not imagine, my dear children, that I have the least desire of making you unsociable, or morose. My intention is only to inspire you with elevated sentiments: to teach you the true value of things; that you may not mistake tinsel for gold; but that you may use this world as not abusing it: and that you may be assured, that a conscientious discharge of your duty is the only source of real pleasure; that to reach forth comfort to the miserable, gives the truest satisfaction; and furnishes the mind with an enjoyment, which no entertainments or diversions can afford.

Can there be a more pitiable object than one whose whole happiness depends on a fox chace,

a concert, or a play? Should either of these fail him, he is undone: or, if by chance he should be so circumstanced, as to be out of the reach of them, he is so miserable, that his existence is a burthen to him.

Who, on the contrary, is more happy than he who furnished with the means of amusing solitued, can sit down and relish the pleasures of reading and contemplation? Such a man goes out into the world merely for recreation, and to discharge the duties which he owes to society: he considers the public amusements as incidental means of relaxation; but can never be induced to set his heart on such useless trifles.

As your military life may often oblige you to live in countries very illy supplied even with common necessaries, you must accustom yourselves to be well satisfied, wherever you are. In order to which, reflect that the mind is the principal object which deserves your attention; and that if you cultivate the growth of virtue in your hearts, you will have within yourselves a never failing source of satisfaction.

The diversions of the field are certainly amusing; the charms of music are unqestionably great; but our attachment to either, falls

little short of madness, if we suffer them to engross our whole time, or best affections. It is temperance which must give a relish even to our pleasures; and which alone renders them worthy of a rational soul. When we would be always amused, we lose the idea of amusement; even what is most delicious becomes insipid, by being constantly within our reach. Every thing grows dull to that heart which is a prey to voluptuousness; every unnecessary refinement made use of to whet the appetite for pleasure, produces a painful satiety. If you only consider recreation as the remedy of fatigue, it will be very easy to find amusement: studied pleasures are only for those whose appetites are in a manner exhausted.

As you are now arrived at an age in which your passions begin to shew themselves; guard with the utmost care against every thing which may corrupt your morrals, or disturb your tranquillity. Youth is the torrid zone of life; and the irregular love of women the source of inquietude and misfortunes. History abounds with instances of those ravages which it is continually making: it presents itself to us under the attractive idea of pleasure; but it soon becomes a torment, which disorders the imagin-

ation, distracts the mind, and tyrannizes over the heart.

Whoever is thoroughly subject to its power, is always ready to violate the most sacred duties; he forgets his friends, his country, and his GOD; he sees nothing but the object of his passion; he hearkens to nothing but the voice of his unbridled desires.

In this dreadful situation you will be sure to find yourselves, if you know not how to fill up your time in a proper manner. The passions must be subdued by the stubborness of labour; and temptation must be resisted, by avoiding the occasions of it: we are sure of being lost, whenever we seek for danger. The miseries of lust may be read in the very faces of those who give themselves up to it. Nothing exhausts and enervates like debauchery; it destroys at once the understanding and the health.

You will tell me, perhaps that by my system of morality ALL pleasures are forbidden: No my children; there are many recreations which virtue allows; and in which you will find sufficient satisfaction, when you only seek them for the sake of amusement.

A cheerful conversation, an evening walk, a

scene of contemplation, an interesting book, a dinner with your friends, an innocent mirth, these should be your amusements. And these will have charms enough, if you know the nature of true pleasure; I mean that which is not purchased with pain or remorse; and which leaving the mind at all times in the same easy state in which it found it, is under no apprehension of shame, nor fears the censures of mankind.

If a libertine would venture to calculate all the difficulties and embarrassments, which he is under, to disguise his conduct from the eyes of men, and to conceal his shame from his parents or his friends; he would see that his life is a continual torment: and that the wretched privilege of ruining his constitution, and destroying his life, is purchased with endless vexations. In vain does he shelter himself from the reproaches of men; GOD sees him and his crimes, in the very moment of commission; and they are written in that everlasting book, in which all our actions are recorded.

Frequently reflect, I beseech you, on what I have said; and you will find, that true satisfaction consists only in an upright attention to

your duty. A mind so composed will receive pleasure even from a sight of a flower beginning to disclose its beauties, or from a murmuring stream; or even from viewing the formation of the smallest insect. A reflecting mind improves every contemplation of the wonderful works of the Creator; it finds numberless beauties in those objects which pass unnoticed by persons of a dissipated turn.

What delight is the prospect of a flowery meadow capable of affording to a mind unsullied by vice! What satisfaction does a tender and a virtuous heart feel, from the conscious sense of a good action! Such as these are the pleasures, which I wish you to experience: we are always independent when we have the resources of entertainment within ourselves. He, who is always running about in search of happiness, seldom finds any thing more than the shadow of it.

Let your minds then open themselves to the pleasures which Virtue offers to your acceptance; and think, that as effeminacy is the parent of chagrin, you will no longer be able to support yourselves than while you are fond of labour, and know how to diversify it. This variety tends admirably to hinder distaste;

nothing being so tedious as an uniform sameness of employment.

Whilst you carefully avoid the company of libertines, I am sure you will be safe; but if once you associate with them, you will infallibly become a prey to vice; their conversation tends only to seduce, and their examples are infectious. Accustomed to receive, from the most plausible writers, whatever can inspire them with the love of pleasure; they praise, extol and recommend them wherever they go: as a cloud scatters hail, or rain, over every country through which it passes.

I am sensible that you have need of resolution. But what is a man, that is driven about with every wind; who can be good with such as are good, and a libertine with such as are dissolute: in short, who has no inclinations or purpose of his own? If you think my advice tends only to render your life melancholy, you will neither do justice to my affection nor to my discernment. Adopt the measures which I recommend, and you will very soon know by experience, that as your happiness is the only earthly object of my care, so I am neither mistaken in the end, nor in the means which I point out to you of effecting it. The

voice of a mother, so deeply interested as I am in your welfare, is not the voice of treachery. Death approaching, begins to open my eyes; and imparts to me new rays of light: it destroys indeed my bodily strength, but it increases the powers of my understanding. It redoubles my love of those whom I consider as a part of myself, which will soon survive me; and, as it were, secure to me a continuance on that earth, on which I shall no longer personally exist.

If any thing can afford me comfort in death, it will be the confidence that you will conscientiously observe my precepts. Promise me, therefore, my beloved children, with such expressions as a sense of duty will suggest: promise me that you will conform your lives to the rules which I have here laid down, and that you will not dishonour my memory by an irregular and vicious conduct.

Here the children of our excellent mother cast themselves at her feet: and in the midst of tears and sighs protested, that their lives should be exactly such as she had marked out to them; and that they had rather die in her presence, than make her such promises, as they did not mean to perform. Each of them

embraced her in the tenderest manner; after which the generous parent finished her conference by saying, in a steady but interrupted tone of voice—

I receive your protestations with the utmost comfort: I would make it known, that it might be a witness against you, if you should ever counteract your own solemn engagements. The world, corrupt as it is, would then shew, that it has virtue enough to set itself against you, and vindicate my rights: but in so doing, I should think I dishonoured you by my unjust apprehensions. Only remember, that no one, without GOD's assisting grace, can attain to any thing which is good; and that you stand in need of succour from heaven, to enable you to put in practice what you have promised.

CONFERENCE. VIII.

ON AMBITION.

THIS evening shall be employed in finishing the manuscript which your father left you; let us give it that attention, which it deserves.

The love of Honour being the passion of

persons of rank, and especially of soldiers; it is very necessary that you should be taught the best means of regulating it. If it have no bounds, it becomes a head-strong vice; which is ready to sacrifice families, provinces, and kingdoms, nay, even the whole universe to its own interst.—Massacres, wars, depredations of every kind, take their rise only from a false ambition: when this affection of the mind is improved into a system, we no longer regard the law, our country, or our GOD.

I have never been able to read the history of those wretched people without horror, who, to satisfy their inordinate desires, have affected the utter subversion of a whole nation, and feasted their eyes and their hearts with the dreadful spectacle. They are monsters, which deserved to have been buried in oblivion: history ought not even to have transmitted their names to our remembrance. Immortality is the reward of virtue alone; as for wickedness, it is worthy to be consigned to that darkness whence it proceeded.

There is a kind of ambition, which we call emulation: and which, having nothing in its view but the public good, or its own advancement, according to the strictest rules of equity

and honour, must needs be considered as a virtue. Without this species of ambition our faculties would be benumbed, our talents would remain buried; there would be no enterprize, or discovery in the world: men, reduced to a level with the brute creation, would live without rule and without reason.

It was the design of Providence, that our own private interest should be intimately connected with that of the public; and that the general good should be promoted by the exertion of each man's particular abilities. Every one seems to be labouring for himself; and yet this labour, though SELF appears to be the immediate object, soon unites with the common mass of industry: and thus is composed that useful body of men, who maintain the strength and magnificence of the state, at the hazard of their lives, or by the sweat of their brows.

We are no where forbidden to keep our own advancement in our view; but we are at all times required to prefer the public good before our private interest: and while we are less concerned about our own advantage, than about that of our country, we shall never desire any thing, but what is just and reasonable.

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When either arrogance or avarice so far prevails, as to make us wish to appropriate to ourselves the praises and rewards, which are not our due; we then become usurpers, and cease to be worthy citizens.

Ambition is a passion which runs into every extreme; one while it debases him who is enslaved to it; at another time it exalts him above measure: it is the parent of pride on the one hand, and of meanness on the other. Of this sort are those obsequious wretches, who bow themselves at the feet of such as are able to promote them; while they treat those with contempt, from whom they have nothing to expect.

We must be well acquainted with the ambitious if we would be competent judges of the miseries they endure. We should then see what variety of projects, what a succession of uneasinesses fills their imagination: how their minds are distracted with hopes and fears; how continually they are deluded with the phantom of glory, which suddenly vanishes away; and which makes the ambitious man think himself perpetually on the brink of happiness, without ever actually attaining to it. Scarce is one of his desires gratified,

when a second presents itself: his heart like the vessel of the DANAIDES, can never be filled; he is like another TANTALUS, whose thirst is never to be quenched. What a lamentable state is this!

Whether it is the design of Providence to stop the ambitious in his career, or whether he is exhausted by his own desires; I have seen a multitude of young people hurried away by this passion, perish in the midst of their projects of grandeur and advancement. Alas! will there not be earth onough to supply us with a grave; and must we be incessantly reminded, that this life is so short and transitory, that there is not time to form designs, and to see them executed?

It should seem, that the honours with which men feed their imagination, must needs be eternal; and yet—a single moment is sufficient to put an end both to them and their possessors. The earth is covered with inscriptions, which announce the transitory condition of human grandeur: we spend our whole lives in desiring that promotion at which we never arrive, or at least, not before the eve of death. Truly it was well worth our while to torment ourselves night and day, about

what is so full of uncertainty, and of so short duration!

There is only one sort of ambition which I can venture to recommend to you; that of imitating your ancestors, and of serving your country with a zeal which nothing can diminish. In every thing else, let moderation set bounds to your desires: he is worthy of every thing, who thinks he deserves nothing.

They who are continually complaining of the injustice done them, because their merit is not properly attended to, are men of a most ignoble spirit: we adopt a very different language when we feel in our minds that generosity of sentiment which raises us above the caprice of fortune. The mere satisfaction of having honourably served the public, is of more value than every kind of recompence. We must put ourselves in a situation to hope for every thing from heaven; this will prove the best ground of comfort amid all the injustice of men.

I should be very miserable, if I thought you could only rise by means of intrigue. Shew on all occasions a generous greatness of mind, which raises you above all the little artifices, and base compliances, which ambition

studies. Habituate yourselves to desire no other advancement than that which may arise from the performance of your duty; chuse rather to live in obscurity, than to shine with a borrowed lustre. If we would be really honoured by the dignities conferred on us; we must never be ashamed to declare by what means we attained to them: true honour consists not so much in obtaining promotion, as in having deserved it. Those titles with which a man of fashion is distinguished, no longer afford him any real satisfaction than while they are confirmed by the public approbation.

If you love the truth, as I trust you always will, you will be utter strangers to flattery and duplicity; but you must expect in return, that Fortune, who bestows the chief of her favours on compliance and deceit, will not reckon you in the number of her favourites. You will then be great, only in the way which is proper for you; true glory will never leave you. You will find in yourselves, those honours and riches which are not to be found in courts; and you will have this satisfaction, that neither injuries nor death itself will be able to take any thing from you.

It is time for you, my children, to shew to the world an example of true magnanimity: the hearts of too many are so debased, that they only think how they may arrive at honours, without concerning themselves whether the means are good and lawful. Envy, which always forms an atmosphere round virtuous characters, will perhaps consider you as proud; but what doth calumny avail, against a conscience void of offence? It is then we wrap ourselves up in our integrity; and are contented to defy malevolence. Whoever resolutely devotes himself to the practice of virtue, will not fail to have enemies: so invariably is it the lot of real merit to be persecuted, that it is laid down as an axiom, that it must be so.

It is not sufficient to be possessed of military courage, you must have a strength of mind, which extends itself to every part of your conduct; which raises you above all the rumours of malice and envy—which makes you dispise reports and cabals; and which renders you invulnerable to the shafts of ingratitude and revenge.

Do not imagine that under the pretext of elevating your minds, I wish so to debase

them, as to make you indifferent to every insult which may be offered to you: all I have to say on so delicate a subject, is, that your own prudence must be your chief defence. By being affable and well-bred, you will avoid those dreadful rencounters, in which we know what we ought to do, but do not know what we shall be compelled to do.

Whatever may happen to you, never forget, that every subject owes his life to his God and his country; and that *you* doubly owe your's, both as citizens and soldiers. You are appointed by the state as centinels, to watch in its defence; the preservation therefore of your own lives is a necessary part of your duty.

If a trial must be made of your personal courage; war will furnish you with abundant opportunities of shewing it. You never will be accused of want of bravery, while you are seen the last in a retreat, and the foremost to engage; it is in such situations that a noble ambition ought to influence your conduct. When you have only desires of this kind, virtue will secure them, and crown them with blessing and good success.

The duties of a soldier are proper to excite emulation; they never want opportunities to

distinguish themselves. Even peace furnishes them with means of exercising their faculties both of mind and body. It is then they make themselves masters of their profession, and become accomplished through study and practice.

When your rank requires you to make your appearance at court, you will not fail to attend there; not for the sake of offering the incense of adulation to the great; nor to solicit more lucrative employments, but merely to form honourable connexions with men of the best character; and to cherish in your hearts that respectful and filial love, which you owe to your country. Let merit alone speak in your behalf; and leave it for those who wish you well, to give it its proper weight. Your attendance at court will not then be irksome to you; and courtiers will not look upon you with a jealous eye. As you will not have any pretensions, you will have no inducement to act a part; and this simplicity and ease being something uncommon, will perhaps more strongly recommend you than dissimulation. We had once an * Ambassador, who surprised those of every other court; and obtained

* Colbert.

every thing he wanted, by always speaking the truth. Behold in him the perfect model of a worthy minister.

The minds of men are so corrupt, that I should not be at all surprised, if these hints for your future conduct were considered as romantic notions; but if you consult truth and experience, you will think very differently of them. they will convince you, that it is not from the republic of PLATO that I derive these admonitions; and that you will never be truly happy, but when you reduce them into practice. Follow after virtue; make a grateful return for the love which I have shewn you; honour your mother, listen to her instructions: and remember that there is no people on earth, with whom the advice of a dying parent is not accounted as sacred as an oracle.

This conference made such an impression on them, that they kept a profound silence; till their mother, whose very soul was filled with a tender anxiety for her childrens happiness, thus addressing them: Such, my dear children, are the truths of which your hearts must be the faithful depositories; and which you must have continually before your eyes,

as the most lively image of your father. I would to God he had survived me! You would have found in the strength of his understanding, and in the greatness of his sentiments, every thing that is capable of improving and perfecting your own. But alas! this is a vain wish: he is departed as a shadow. You have only had a father—to regret your loss of him; and the hour is at hand, when you will have nothing left you but—the remembrance of a mother.

CONFERENCE. IX.

ON GENEROSITY.

I HAVE often thought that amid all the different modes of educating young people, they have never been sufficiently instructed in the nature of true Generosity. To supply this defect, I intend to shew you, that the practice of this duty raises us to a near resemblance to the Deity. We become imitators of that Providence which dispenses its bounty with profusion; and we resemble those beneficial clouds which distil plenty on every part of the earth.

The spendthrift is as far from generosity as the miser: they are both of them beings who have nothing in view but their own gratifications, without any regard to the necessities of their neighbour. The one throws his money away, and the other locks it up; but misery receives no consolation from either. There is no virtue where there is neither discretion, nor any regard for the public good: whatever has nothing better than vanity for its principle, is certainly far from being worthy of praise.

What indeed would become of us, if our sentiments were wholly under the influence of caprice? Nothing but folly and singularity would be found among men; and that attention to the public welfare which ought to direct our sentiments and conduct, would insensibly come to naught. It is the law of prudence and of reason which determines the use we ought to make of our talents and abilities; and it is only in following this law, that we advance towards perfection, and do honour to humanity.

Riches are either an honour, or a disgrace to those who possess them; it is a real misfortune to be rich, when we know not how to use our riches. I had infinitely rather leave

you in a state of indigence, than know that you were either covetous or extravagant. Avarice renders us the objects of public indignation; prodigality carries us headlong into a thousand difficulties. It is generosity alone, which observes the happy medium betwixt both, which renders us worthy partakers of many blessings: provided it is the work of the heart, and not the effect of humour or ostentation.

What delight does it afford one, to see a generous nobleman, who, giving every thing to benificence, and nothing to vanity, finds resources in frugality, for the supply of the necessities of his friend, the assistance of an indigent widow, or the consolation of the unfortunate! Such a sight as this addresses itself to the heart; and with a power ten thousand times more affecting than any theatrical representation, awakens all the sensibility of the soul, and raises it above humanity itself.

Exhibit to the world, my dear children, such a character as this; consecrate a part of your income to the benefit of your distressed fellow-creatures. Let your liberality extend itself wherever the miseries of others are urgent; adapt your bounty to the different

degrees of wretchedness: when circumstances demand it, be generous according to the extent of your ability, and the exigency of the case.

True generosity consists in giving with propriety, and from good motives: the manner of dispensing is oftentimes more pleasing than the gift itself. A man who gives with an ungracious air, destroys all the merit of his benefaction: if you would oblige by your generosity, you must shew the party whom you serve, that you think it more blessed to give than to receive. A liberal man sets a greater value on gold, chiefly because it enables him to relieve the necessitous.

I have often seen your father give large sums of money to the truly distressed; and perceived that he was more delighted with such an act, than he could have been by any favour conferred upon himself. He felt, in his heart, that there is no satisfaction equal to the pleasure of obliging others. O! if he were now instructing you in my stead; with what earnestness of affection would he encourage you to adopt his sentiments, and imitate his practice! How often hath the generous tear of pity fallen from his eye, at the sight

of a miserable object! Many a time has he led me to the habitations of the wretched: to teach me a proper regard for the poor, and to excite my desire to comfort them. He sought the company of such as needed relief; he conversed freely with them as with brethren; he became a party in their sufferings by a friendly sympathy, and filled their hearts with consolation and joy.

So bright an example must needs engage your reverence and imitation. You are under the strongest obligations to shew those persons who have experienced the goodness of your father, that his virtues have descended to you, and that you are not degenerate: otherwise you will only be despised, and will be considered as unworthy of that inheritance which he has left you.

You live in an age wherein luxury dries up the source of liberality: that we may give full scope to our vanity, we have nothing left for the relief of misery. We do not inquire how much we can spare for acts of mercy; but what will enable us to gratify our passion for the most expensive pleasures? As for generosity, it passes with some for a romantic virtue: and yet I will venture to assure you, that

it is as essential to a man of quality as courage; and that it even makes a part of honesty itself.

You will never be truly great, but so long as greatness is the principle of your actions. Every thing is little in a nobleman who is not generous: his ideas are little, his sentiments are mean. The soul grows narrow and confined when we are thinking only of economy; we must know how to spend and how to give.

Generosity is a virtue which foresees evil, and endeavours to prevent it; which embraces every opportunity of doing good, and is awakened by the first complaint of the miserable. Listen only to her dictates, and you will liberally recompence those who serve you; you will be ready to lend, and will know no greater satisfaction than when you are relieving your neighbour. It is shocking to see men prefer so worthless a possession as money, before the life of their brother; or to see them make use of their riches, only to feed their vanity and pride. I had rather your house were without furniture, and your wardrobe without cloathes; than that you should be insensible to the miseries of the poor. But

complaints; you will comfort him in his sorrows; you will be his protector and his friend. Your father has often told me, that the great VENDOME could have led his troops even into the midst of the sea; so warmly were they attached to their General. They were ready to sacrifice themselves for the sake of a commander, who treated them with humanity; and who knew how to be good to his soldiers, without being familiar with them.

Of that multitude of young persons who are ruined by extravagance, none are capable either of friendship or compassion: their life, which is a continual succession of pleasures, of debts, and embarrassments, puts it out of their power to serve and oblige others. Their vanity and their passions demand all they have; and besides what tends to the gratification of these, nothing more is to be expected. You will see the world filled with this sort of people; who, being distressed in the midst of large *nominal* estates, enrich only those who plunder them, or who lend them money at an extravagant interest. They insult the wretched; they despise the common people; they make a jest of the public misery: and pay

attention only to the instruments of their pleasures, and the ministers of their passions.

These are the men with whom you must never be connected: the company of the wicked is truly pestilential; we insensibly grow familiar with their vices, and we soon begin to imitate them. Engage virtue to find you true friends, and she will procure them for you. There are yet generous minds to be found, whom the world has not corrupted; and who, knowing how to distinguish betwixt the demands of fashion, and those of right reason, would rather abridge themselves than leave the wretched without consolation and relief. We cannot, to be sure, assist all who suffer; but a well-disposed mind makes amends for this inability, by those expressions of pity and regret, which render its generosity unquestionable.

It only remains, that I recommend it to you not to imitate the folly of those mistaken devotees, who to make a greater show with their alms, divide into a great number of small portions, what is scarce sufficient to relieve a twentieth part of those among whom it is distributed. By confining your benefactions within a narrower compass, you will be ena-

bled to do more real good; you may perhaps save some distressed families from ruin: whereas alms scattered here and there, are like medicines which palliate, but never heal.

Give the reins to your natural disposition, which has hitherto appeared good; and in the case of generosity I know no better guide.—Fear not, that you shall lesson your fortune by assisting the necessitous: we only ruin ourselves by being vicious: Virtue keeps every one within proper bounds who is attentive to her precepts.

What I have neglected to do in this respect, I charge YOU to supply; filial affection engages you to do it: and my love demands it of you in the most earnest manner, as the means of enabling me to live, even after my death. You cannot but see how nearly it approaches: my eyes are already grown dim; my voice is weakened; and nothing remains to me, but that spirit which a sense of duty inspires. I will keep it alive as much as possible, even to my latest moment, that I may omit nothing which can possibly improve your understanding, or exalt your sentiments. As an equal share of attention is due from me to all my children, I shall discourse to-morrow

evening with your sister: she is of an age to understand the language of reason; and she is so apt to learn, that I have great cause to hope my advice will not be thrown away upon her.

I am obliged to summon together all the information I have ever received, that I may be the better enabled to furnish you all with the means of conducting yourselves aright. My heart is constantly filled with anxiety on your account; it urges, it conjures me to unfold to you all that it can think of, and all that it desires to secure your happiness.

What a comfort it will be to me, if death should leave me time fully to declare my sentiments to you all! There is a wonderful difference betwixt the instructions which we receive from a master, and the advice which is delivered by the mouth of a mother: whose words are every one of them, expressive of the tenderest affection. Could you but know, what passes in my mind every time I speak to you! It appears, as if you actually resided in my heart; and as though my blood, which can hardly any longer circulate through my veins, served only to be employed for your support.

No: nothing can equal the tenderness o sentiment, which your presence excites in m heart: I have told you so a hundred times and I shall tell you so again, even to my las breath. The more ardent our affection is the more it delights to repeat its tenderne and transports. Alas! every thing conspire to affect me, whenever I behold you: I se your father in every line and feature: whe you speak, it is his voice I hear. In short, I see my own heart represented in yours; an this assures me, that when I shall cease t live, I shall be renewed in you: ah! disma moment of separation, both to you and me.

CONFERENCE. X.

ON FEMALE CONDUCT.

I HAVE long wished, my dear daughter, for this opportunity of freely conversing with you on subjects of the utmost consequence t you. Your youth, the world into which you are going, the snares which it lays, and the few days which I have yet to live, all induce me to open my heart to you, and to give you

some instructions relative to your dangerous situation.

If you could possibly entertain a doubt of my affection; the effort I am now making, when my soul is bowed down with sickness and sorrow, and sees nothing before it but the horrors of the grave, must needs convince you how earnestly I wish to secure your happiness. My wishes will never be realized, but while you are careful to lay down proper rules for your conduct, and suffer nothing afterwards to tempt you to break through them.

If you are so unhappy as to give yourself up to the distraction of the world, you will no longer be able to maintain the dominion over your own heart: you will live an utter stranger to yourself; and there will not be a single day, which you will know how to dispose of in a proper manner. The world is never to be satisfied; the more we bestow upon it, the more unreasonable are its demands.

Your sex requires the utmost circumspection; what among MEN is reputed a venial fault, is an absolute crime with us. There are a thousand things said and done in their company, which a woman ought neither to hear nor see.—I would wish that a young

woman should be silent and modest; and the world dissipated as it is, expects the same. Its judgment of us is very severe; and it often fixes our character for life.

If you are over-solicitous to please others, you will run into a ridiculous affectation: you must make yourself agreeable to every one you converse with, without letting them see that you are thinking about it. Nothing pleases which is not natural. A woman, who sets herself to draw the attention and admiration of all upon her, will soon become an arrant coquette, if she be not one already.

It is only a natural and virtuous behaviour which will secure to you esteem and approbation; if this should not succeed, so much the worse for those you meet with. Whatever happens, this truth is indisputable, that one of the brightest ornaments of the sex is modesty: and that a young lady can never appear to greater advantage, than when she is utterly divested of affectation in her behaviour.

Do not confound the ideas of modesty and timidity: the one pleases, the other distresses;

We cannot avoid being hurt, when we see a young person confused and disconcerted. There is such a thing as an ingenuous confi-

dence, which should make you not unwilling to speak, when the subject requires it; and to sing or dance, when a proper opportunity presents itself. If you are not vain, you will not be timorous to a fault.

I shall be very sorry for you if ever vanity takes possession of your heart; for then, instead of being agreeable and communicative, you will be always unhappy in yourself, and your boldness will only serve to make you ridiculous to others. A disdainful carriage is that of a person of mean talents, and a bad heart; people of quality are less apt to assume it, than those of an inferior rank. We seldom endeavour to set ourselves off by pride, but when we have no other means of distinguishing ourselves; this is a ridiculous affectation, which the world always laughs at, but never forgives: the more humiliating our behaviour is to others, the more pleasure do they take in setting us down.

Affability will supply the want of those qualities, which you do not possess: it is the best apology that I know for little imperfections. Great allowances are always made for one who has no pride or pretensions to superior merit: but self-love naturally raises in us

an opposition to arrogance and presumption. Many women have become the subjects of satire, only by their haughty behaviour. Your figure is not without its share of elegance; and the handsomer a lady is, the more ready people are to suspect that she is vain.

The education I have hitherto given you convinces me that the toilet will not engage your chief attention; you ought to spend as much time at it, as is necessary for your decent appearance in company. We must not fly in the face of fashion, or make ourselves remarkable by our singularity; but there are certain trifles in dress, which we ought to despise. Those which make a woman a slave to her dress, are fit only for such weak minds, as the present age with all its attachment to trifles, hath not yet learnt to esteem.

Let your hours be properly regulated; and you will find time to worship God, and to pursue some useful study. You will then have no imaginary complaints; and will be an utter stranger to the miseries attendant upon idleness: a life well employed, is always an agreeable life.

Do not think of amusing yourself with reading romances: it is a real malady to have one's

in filled with such ideas as they furnish.
: never see things in their true light; they
: us a taste only for ridiculous extrava-
ces, extraordinary adventures, and mar-
ous sentiments: we insensibly adopt the
uage of self-importance and affectation,
become ourselves the heroines of ro-
ce.

he books you read should be good, and
ced within a narrow compass. It is a
ake that our sex ought to STUDY. We
: no offices of trust to fill, nor any digni-
to be invested with; and therefore we
: only need to learn what is necessary to
the mind, and improve the understand-

Almost every learned woman shews
the sciences do not belong to us: I have
om seen one of them, that was not vain,
sive, and affected in her manner of think-
speaking, and acting.

our attention should be directed to works
genuity; and you should learn the best
ods of regulating a family, whenever you
be settled in the world. You may per-
be told, that this is not the fashionable
e of education; but fashion must not be
ed to supersede duty. A woman whose

life is a perpetual round of trifles, is only fit to be made the subject of a comedy.

Pride persuades persons of a certain rank, that they live only to enjoy themselves. How should I be grieved, if you entertained such sentiments as these! Pleasure ought only to be considered as a relaxation from fatigue; and must always be regulated and approved by virtue.—Observe this rule, and you will see what sentiments we ought to entertain of the generality of public diversions. I have so good an opinion of your understanding, as to think you would one day despise me, if I recommended them to you, as the means of giving you any solid satisfaction. If *one* innocent mind have been corrupted by them, that alone is sufficient to prove them dangerous; besides this, libertines speak highly enough of them, to make us suspect that they are rather of a mischievous, than useful tendency.

Music is with great propriety considered as an accomplishment in a lady: and is often found of great use in those hours, wherein we wish for amusement.

Remember, my dear child, that an obliging behaviour is the very life of society. There

s no one who is not pleased with a smiling countenance; a want of good humour would render you insupportable to yourself and every one about you. A reasonable soul ought always to be under the guidance of reason; the behaviour of a capricious mistress is a great discouragement to her attendants; if you would secure their affection, endeavour to deserve it.

My weakness, which daily increases, will not allow me to hope that I shall live to see you settled in the world: but it is GOD's will that it should be so; and to his good Providence I submit. Yet let me previously observe to you, that an amiable and obliging wife may almost always ensure to herself a kind and indulgent husband. Let your affection be confined to him, whom you have engaged to love: seek only to please him, and peace shall dwell in your house. If, in spite of all your care and prudence, things should not always go smoothly on, you will find a conscience void of reproach, the greatest comfort in the world.

Keep yourself an utter stranger to intrigues; when we are faithful in the discharge of our duty, we have no need to have recourse

to artifice and falsehood. The conduct of a virtuous woman never shuns the light: the more her character is inquired into, the better she is satisfied. It is a pitiable situation to live in a state of perpetual apprehension; and to have no better security against public shame than the prudence or fidelity of a domestic whom one has made a confidant. No thing is so dearly purchased, as the confidence of low and venial minds: be connected only with women of the strictest virtue; it is our acquaintance, which fixes our reputation.

If you should have children; do not part with them at that time, when the light of reason begins to dawn in their minds. Then it is, that the soul is capable of impressions, which can never afterwards be effaced; then it is, that it must be filled with whatsoever can inspire it with the love of truth. How very imperfectly do they discharge the duty of a mother, who only see their children, either to admire, or to chide them! Reflect on the conduct of the fowls of the air: always engaged in the care of their young, they never leave them untill they have taught them to fly. Are we less wise than these irrational creatures? One would think, by the difference

n our conduct, that reason was inferior to instinct.

When you appear thoroughly impressed with a love of your duty, you will have fewer admirers of your person, than of your virtue. —There is nothing more disgusting than the character of a woman, who listens only to fulsome compliments: who only lies in wait for flattery, and whose behaviour on obtaining it is truly ridiculous. A well disposed mind treats every one with proper respect; and never loses its dignity, even when it is most familiar.

Be always upon your guard against a professed wit: he is a critic, who often does us great mischief: if he be not satirical, he is at least very forward, and his repartees are to be dreaded.—Modesty is no objection to any person: and few have ever yet complained of it. To give your own opinion with diffidence, to hear that of others with attention, and candidly to defend your neigbour's reputation where it may be defended, is a sure way to be loved and esteemed.

Abhor luxury and idleness; these two which are the sources of many other vices, weaken and destroy the powers of the mind.

Study nothing more than a delicacy of sentiment and behaviour; speak without affectation, and write without disguise: nothing is so pleasing as the truth. The letters of Madame DE SEVIGNE, which you cannot read too often, have never been without admirers, from their being so exactly conformable to nature; it is a sure sign of your want of wit, when you are always endeavouring to shew it.

Such is the advice, my dear daughter, which my own experience and my heart suggest; a knowledge of the world will supply the rest: this is a science, which never is forgotten, and which prevents our being deficient in any necessary point of behaviour.

You are doubtless surprized that, in a series of instruction, which comprehends the whole life, I should have said nothing on the subject of religion. But you will cease to wonder, when I tell you, that I reserve a subject, so interesting to your brothers and yourself, for another conference; when I have an opportunity of speaking to you all together.

Your father, whom you scarce remember, charged me to be particularly attentive to your education. Though he is no more, he ought to live continually in your heart, by a constant

love of virtue; this is the best way of recalling him to your mind, and of shewing your respect for his memory.

The hour is at hand, when you will be an orphan; but you will be in the hands of God; he is more especially the Protector of the fatherless. In other respects you may depend on the goodness of your uncle, whose sentiments I well know: he loves you, and he is a man of the strictest integrity. He will consider you as his daughter; and will settle you in the world, so as to make you happy. With all my heart I wish you to be so; for it is impossible to love you more tenderly than I do. But enough for the present, my dear child; it is time for you to retire; and I am too much agitated by talking thus tenderly with you. Your presence excites those tears which my grief will not suffer to break forth:—I feel myself almost sufficated; I would wish to recover my spirits, but I am not able: O! amiable child!—O! mother, deeply afflicted!

CONFERENCE. XI.

ON STUDY.

THOUGH the presence of your sister caused in me such emotions of tenderness, as almost entirely overcame me; yet I am not willing any longer to defer my admonitions on the love which you ought to have to STUDY. I perceive that I am hastening to my end; and I desire nothing more sincerely than that, being reduced to eternal silence, I may find a place in your remembrance. This is the portion of a being, who has only a borrowed and most precarious life.

I shall not enter into a detail, which supposes a knowledge of the sciences, and of the learned professors of them. For besides that it was always my opinion, that a woman ought not to study mathematics, or philosophy; that round of dissipation in which I have spent so great a part of my life, has left me little more than common experience, and some remembrance of what I have heard others mention on this head.

I should imagine that you can never do better than devote to literary pursuits the mo-

ments which are at your own disposal: a mind, which we neglect to cultivate, is like a body which we do not feed. By reading, the faculties are enlarged, the memory is strengthened, and the imagination is enriched; but the principal point is, to distinguish what is worth reading, in the midst of so many works as are continually making their appearance in the world; this choice is a matter of real difficulty.

Mr.——, to whose merit you are no strangers, and whom I have consulted upon this subject, is of opinion, that you should immediately have recourse to such writings as tend to regulate the morals, and to form the mind. He advises your beginning with books of such a nature as will furnish you with sound principles on the most important obligations of life; such as will shew you the delusions of sensual conduct, and the destruction occasioned by the indulgence of our passions; such as will elevate your minds, by making you acquainted with God and with yourselves—And among such the Bible should be ranked as first.

When you have first taken care to furnish yourselves with virtuous sentiments, you will diligently consult such authors as have written

on the subject of your profession: it bei an unpardonable ignorance not to be well quainted with whatever is the business of c lives. Your uncle, who has been engaged military service all his life, and who has s died all the arts and exercises of war, will the best director in this respect; and will fi nish you with the properest backs on the su ject: apply yourselves diligently to this stuc and you will soon reap the fruits of it. soldier, who goes on only in the beaten trac without making himself thoroughly acquai ed with the nature of his business, is little b ter than a piece of clock-work; which mu be set in motion, and never deviates from t path assigned it.

After this, you will learn to know the wor *Bruyere's* characters, and *Rochefoucau* maxims, will be found useful to you; in th writers you will see the portraits of all so of men, both in their public and private pacity.

History is another picture, which y should carefully examine: all the operatic of the heart and mind are there descrit in the most interesting manner. *Bossu*

treatise on this subject is considered as a master-piece.

Books of mere amusement, which do not take their place till after those of instruction, are however necessary, by way of relaxation, to prevent fatigue. I know no romance worth reading, except Don Quixotte and Telemachus: almost all the rest are either trifling, or mischievous: fiction is seldom made use of with safety; it either serves to embellish vice, or to ridicule virtue

It is very right, that you should read the best poets: poetry elevates the mind, warms the imagination, and makes us perfect in the art of expression; but care must be taken to study the poets with discretion. Prose, being less likely to seduce the mind, is more proper for young persons who suffer themselves too easily imposed upon: we can never be too much on our guard against the glaring appearance of what is falsely accounted beautiful. I have known many people, whose taste has been spoiled by reading poetry only: the rhyme seduces, harmony of numbers bewitches; and what is often only fiction, passes for truth.

Never purchase books without consulting

of every science, as M. de Fontenelle observes, is difficult; and nothing but assiduity and labour will enable you to taste the pleasures of it. I should recommend it to you to devote three hours, at least, in every day, to study: two in the morning, and one in the evening. You are never to forget that you owe something to your rank in life, as well as to society; and that it is with the soul, as it is with the body: excessive hunger and repletion are both injurious to it; by the one it is famished, by the other it is overloaded.

There is another inconvenience, in an indiscreet love of study; that it makes us too cold and philosophical; it makes men behave in company with an air of too much gravity, and absence; and gives them the appearance of old men at the age of thirty. Accustom yourselves to leave your books as we leave the company of our friends; seem to forget them, until you take them up again. The world, perhaps, is very little interested in what you read; so that probably what nearly affected *you*, might to *them* be perfectly indifferent; every one has his own particular manner of considering things. Our conversation with the dead, demands recollection,

and application; but that which we hold with the living should be full of ease, and sprightliness.

If you are really fond of study, you will every where find an opportunity of gratifying your taste: the very grass on which you tread, and the insect which you despise, will serve to display the wonders of divine wisdom. Accustom yourself always to travel with a commonplace book; a landscape, a monument, a ruin, every thing of this sort, finds a place in the journal of a person of reflection.

The knowledge of customs and manners is another science, which deserves your attention. You will doubtless have opportunities, in the course of your profession, of seeing the different nations which surround us; war lays open every country to the observation of the soldier.—You will then be able yourselves to mark the difference betwixt a Spaniard and a Frenchman, an Italian and an Englishman. But remember at the same time, that in this variety there is something not unlike the parterres of a garden; in which each flower has its merit and perfection: it is a great error, to expect that all the world should be just such as ourselves.

I have nothing more to say on this subject; my knowledge of it is very confined, and my strength too much exhausted to be able to prolong this conference. You live in an age in which you will not want for directors, if you know how to choose them: as for me, my chief study at present, is the contemplation of death. I perceive nothing but shades of darkness, which surround me on every side. My tender regard for you indeed serves from time to time to disperse them, and opens to my view a gleam of light, by the help of which I behold you, as the delight of my soul, and the very joy of my heart. Nothing moves me, where you are not concerned; but I am immediately roused, when your welfare is in question, and I at once forget all my pains and all my infirmities.

If my attachment be too strong; GOD, I hope will pardon it; for he sees the very bottom of my heart, that it has at present only one desire, viz. that you may be truly virtuous. I will not say, I would sacrifice my life to obtain this blessing; for alas! what would that be worth at the hands of one, who has only a few wretched hours, or perhaps minutes, to live? But this is most certain, tha

I never yet desired any thing more earnestly, than I now wish for your happiness, both in this world and the next.

I humbly hope, that GOD will open the kingdom of Heaven to receive me; and I trust I shall hereafter see you with me there. The short enjoyment I have had of you upon earth, is not sufficient to satisfy my affection for you; I perceive it yet too much alive to die with me.

Alas! how much do we suffer, when the heart is so full of sensibility as mine is! But I must even divest myself of nature, if I would get rid of my sentiments of love and tenderness for my children.

CONFERENCE XII.

ON THE CLERICAL CHARACTER.

THE disorder of this excellent lady increasing, they despaired of her being any more able to discourse with her family: but it pleased GOD, that the symptoms abated, and her strength returned for a little while. Ever

filled with the tenderest concern for her children, she embraced this opportunity of calling her other son and thus addressed him—

You, my son, have made choice of a state of life very different from that of your brothers; the advice, therefore, which I would wish to give you, ought to be personally directed to yourself. My great comfort, with respect to the profession you have engaged in, is, that I have not over-ruled your choice; this encourages me to hope, that GOD will bless you in it. You have more need, than any other, of the gifts of Heaven; because you have more duties to discharge: no instance of misconduct in an ecclesiastic is trifling or inconsiderable.

I am but little acquainted with divinity, or with the books which you ought to study: but I know that your life ought to be a life of application; and that if idleness be a fault in us, in one of your profession it is a crime.

I know also that the books, which should engage your principal attention, are not merely books of amusement; but those which treat of christian perfection, and the means which lead us to it. For how will you be able

to direct others, if you have not yourself learnt the way?

Be careful not to be occupied too much with secular affairs: those of the clergy who have been so engaged, have never yet found it the way to procure esteem. They are indeed sought after, and consulted; but they are not really respected: we think with reason, that their function should be sacred.

Eternally to renounce the world, and afterwards eagerly to pursue the concerns of it, is to assume a character truly ridiculous: the life of an ecclesiastic immersed in worldly concerns, is inconsistency itself.

I say nothing to you of your morals. The most unsullied virtue is so essential to your profession, that he who is destitute of it, is an object of detestation in the sight of GOD and man: in spite of the corruption of the age, a vicious clergyman is insupportable. Even the libertine is shocked, when he hears of the misconduct of a person invested with your sacred character: all men expect, that they, who are required to set an example to others, should themselves be really exemplary.

What can be more offensive, than the sight

What must one think of a clergyman running from morning to night, from one scene of pleasure to another? The world laughs at him, religion weeps for him.

I need not say that you cannot be too circumspect in every thing which concerns the ordinances of religion; one doctrine of which you well know, cannot be attacked, without materially injuring the whole. A priest who should himself be wretch enough to treat them with contempt, must be considered as one who holds himself up to ridicule and just reproach.

Consider it as your duty, to frequent the society of the most learned and virtuous men; their conversation reflects light upon us; and we insensibly copy after their manners. Be cautious in your behaviour to the female sex, avoiding all offensive levity: it fares with the reputation of an ecclesiastic, as with a mirror; the smallest blemish destroys its beauty.

Let your library consist of the most celebrated books, and delight in reading them. An ignorant clergyman is a man who makes sport for the public; one who dishonours religion, and whom all men despise.

Rather be afraid, than ambitious, of heap-

ıg up dignities; at least never try to obtain hem by adulation or intrigue. He who purhases by mean compliances the highest preerments in the church, loses oftentimes his ionour, if not his soul. Merit alone ought to ecommend an ecclesiastic, who knows what is profession demands of him, and is disposd to conform himself to the duties of it.

Be always ready to open your heart and our purse to the truly wretched; and especially if you are largely provided for, consider our riches as intended principally for their enefit. There is nothing so opposite to the enor of the gospel, as a covetous or ambiious priest. Your own patrimony will be ufficient for you, if you are not addicted to ıxury and excess; it is this, which almost lways reduces men to poverty.

Aim at simplicity in your furniture, and ı every thing that is external; let your virıes be your principal ornament, and be indifren about the rest.

Let not pride ever take possession of our heart; it is the characteristic of a weak ınd, and the surest way to become hateful) others. There is no one, who is not harmed with condescension and sweetness of

behaviour; but if this were not the case, how is it possible to reconcile an haughty disposition with the precepts of the gospel?

Such, my dear son, are the instructions which I thought it my duty to give to you; every one of them is dictated by love, and an earnest desire of promoting your happiness. The seminary in which you have been educated, must needs have inspired you with the love of study, and a veneration for religion. Never forget the principles there imbibed; and often reflect that a person of your character ought only to appear in the world for the sake of improving it. His faults are by no means confined to himself; they furnish all who see them, with a pretence for strengthening themseles in their wickedness, and persisting in it.

You must remember, that the conduct of your brothers ought not to be a matter of indifference to you: your profession engages you to point out to them their duty, and to remonstrate, if you find them negligent of it. But, to give weight to your admonitions, you must set them a good example; and you must administer reproof with tenderness and discretion. Reprehension is always ill received,

the severity of it be not wisely tempered with expressions of affection and humility.

Your father, who was always intent on the welfare of his children, would have taken every method of enabling you to do the highest honour to that profession which you have chosen. May God, who has taken him from us, be himself your conductor and guid! Cleave steadfastly to him, in the faithful service of whom consists all our glory, and all our happiness.

CONFERENCE. XIII.

ON PRIDE.

PRIDE, my dear children, being frequently connected with an exalted situation in life; I think it my duty to set before you the folly and danger of it. Be assured it is this, which hath carried every species of luxury to its present height; and hath made that the idol of almost every rank. We impoverish ourselves, merely for the sake of outward shew; and every possible shift is made to *cut a figure* in the world.

We are anxious to conceal our common original; and that common destiny which puts us all upon a level. We endeavour, if possible, to persuade ourselves, that a rich man is quite a different creature from the rest of mankind; and that there is no such thing as real greatness in the world, inseparable from riches and honours.

The effect of such a persuasion is, that virtue has no charms to engage our affections; it is a shade which we avoid, that we may bask in the sunshine of fortune, whom with idolatrous veneration we adore.

We have seen the luxury and pride, which abound at this time in our cities, begin and increase in such a manner, as to ruin the most opulent families: we have seen that simplicity exploded, which distinguished our ancestors, and rendered their manners so amiable and respectable. Their descendants very soon began to be ashamed of *their* plain attire, *their* humble accommodations, *their* venerable portraits; nothing was any where to be seen but a profusion of expense, in building magnificent houses, in purchasing the richest dresses, and having the most costly furniture.

What extravagance do you not see in this

espect? I am sure it often astonishes you; nd you are thoroughly sensible of the folly f it; and cannot but perceive, how greatly ur morals suffer by it, and how bitterly vir- ue laments the effects of it.

When we grow familiar with vanity, and ake it the object of our love and pursuit; he soul is regarded as a thing of nought, and he body is in a manner idolized: we tor- nent and even ruin ourselves, only for the ake of this; and think of nothing but daz- zling our eyes with ornaments, gratifying our ars with concerts, and our taste with all kinds of meat, however luxurious and ex- pensive.

It is pride which produces effeminacy; and which prevents our ever moving but in equi- pages, ever sleeping but on beds of down: it is continually inventing new pleasures; it ener- vates the mind; and renders even the stout- est men, little superior to women both in their dress, and in their general turn of life.

O! my children, place this picture often before your eyes; and let it prevent your giv- ing yourselves up to pernicious luxury: my former propensity to this foolish vanity is the cause why I am not better able to speak to

you on the subject; but it has also enabled me thoroughly to discover its emptiness and folly. My own reflections convince me, that we forget we are rational, or even human creatures; and fancy that our wealth is only given us to procure whatever tends to the gratification of our passions. Luxury is an abyss, which swallows up the greatest estates, and which we seldom are able to fathom: the fashions which it studies, and the trifles which engage its attention, are so many occasions of our ruin.

Be truly great, and you will never be vain; you will know that there is a certain propriety to be found between the two extremes of avarice and prodigality; and it is this, which ought to regulate your table, your dress, and your equipage. You will know that pride, in making us vain, renders us ridiculous; and that when this prevails, we see young men effeminately devoting themselves to the toilet, and passing half their time under the hands of the hair-dresser. You will find them as seriously engaged in determining the colour of their cloaths, the size and shape of the shoe-buckle, and other such trifles, as if they were matters of the most serious importance.

If you give yourselves up to pride, you will be slaves to these idle vanities; and you will thereby weaken the force of that manly virtue, which you naturally inherit from your worthy father.

Besides this, you will have every kind of whim and caprice to gratify; you will find numbers ready to supply your demands, by advancing you sums of money. You will be told, that to be in debt is no reflection upon the character of a man of quality; and you will be encouraged to multiply debts, and to ruin your fortune. Every day furnishes us with examples, which confirm this truth. How many persons of immense estates outlive their income; and find themselves surrounded by domestics whom they cannot pay; by creditors, who are frequently worrying them; filled with remorse, which perpetually torments them; and reduced at length to a state of extreme indigence and necessity!

Such are the effects of pride: it carries us headlong into every kind of extravagance; and presents to our view a house, the furniture of which is not yet paid for, the domestics full of discontent, and the master of

the family himself at his wit's end, being no longer able to find creditors to trust him.

These, my dear children, these are the miseries which you must expect to suffer, if you give way to the suggestions of pride. But even supposing it did not carry you to this extremity of distress, I need not say more to dissuade you from it, than that it will tend to rob you of your virtue, make you regardless of the miseries of your neighbour, and fond of all those effeminate indulgencies, and that ridiculous parade, which the world encourages, and so passionately admires.

I should not do justice to your father, if I did not observe to you, that he was generous and even magnificent according to his circumstances; yet a noble simplicity, and a prudent economy peculiarly distinguished his character. His uncorrupted manners rejected all those expensive trifles, which an unreasonable fondness for luxury has rendered fashionable. The love of his country so engrossed his affections, as to leave no room for vanity in his heart.

Every wise and virtuous person, considers luxury as the source of all kinds of iniquity: he knows that it is in the school of pride that

we learn to despise the poor, to harden our hearts, and to seek after every refinement of pleasure. We cannot bear the sight of an object that is disagreeable to behold; we cannot breathe but among perfumes; we cannot exist, but in the midst of softness and pleasure.

It is a great misfortune not to be able to distinguish betwixt the superfluities and the necessaries of life; our passions are so many tyrants, who allow us no rest till we have found the means of satisfying their demands. Hence we see, that those among the great, who listen to the dictates of pride, are really in a state of slavery; they are absolutely dependent on fashion, in the most trifling circumstance of their lives. If any article be defective in the midst of all their splendour, they are distracted, they lose all patience; they appear to be so entirely taken up with external ornaments, with finery and parade, that they seem to live for no other purpose than to gratify a restless appetite for trifles.

When we visit persons of this turn of mind, we do them *the honour* to be utterly regardless of themselves, that we may give our whole attention to their furniture. We speak

to them only of what is every where around them; we attend only to that which dazzles our eyes: as if we meant to give them to understand, that if they had nothing to exhibit, more worthy of our notice than themselves, they might be contented to live in perpetual solitude.

Surely, my dear children, there is nothing very captivating in such empty characters as these; yet such is the glory of those who live in subjection to luxury and pride, that they are not regarded on their own account, but merely for the sake of their table and their shew. As a proof of which, if they lose their riches, they instantly sink into contempt; it is hardly remembered that such persons ever existed. How different is the state of those who are really virtuous! Whatever misfortunes befal them, they seldom want a panegyrist or admirer; and are generally regarded and esteemed. History furnishes us with a thousand instances of persons, whose merit, without any other support, has been respected even in the lowest obscurity: such is the power and influence of truth!

Which of you then, my dear children, would not rather embrace a virtuous poverty,

than be satiated with luxuries, and be destitute of virtue? I am persuaded, that neither of you would hesitate a moment, in the determination of your choice.

If my health would suffer me to enter more particularly on the subject, I could shew you other evil effects of pride; and particularly, that it attracts to itself persons of the most trifling and insignificant character. Look at the house of such a one as I have been describing; and you will find it filled with those pretty gentlemen, whose whole life is spent in ruining their fortune and their constitution. You will find it to be the rendezvous of gamesters (for gaming is an inseparable appendage to persons of that turn of mind which I have been describing) in short, luxury has there displayed her utmost charms, to ruin those very people, who are studious to support her empire in the world.

An elegant simplicity will deliver you from the society of men of such licentious conduct, among whom virtue almost always suffers shipwreck. Where pride prevails, religion is despised; an immortal spirit cannot accommodate herself to those perishable objects, which tend only to chain her down to the earth.

Do not imagine that luxury is instantaneous in its growth: it has its beginning, and its progress: at first, it is no more than a desire of having our houses more elegantly furnished, or our persons more fashionably drest, than others of our rank. The love of fashion insensibly gets the ascendency over us; 'till we think nothing agreeable, in which there is not an air of novelty. Scarcely is this first step taken, but simplicity becomes insupportable: we despise a man, whom we see indifferently cloathed; and we annex the idea of supreme felicity to idle and fantastic pleasures.

We cannot but hold pride in the lowest contempt, when we reflect that every one of this disposition enjoys the blessing of society without contributing any thing towards its advantage — he deprives the community of many useful members—does not properly discharge any duty whatever—and dies without leaving any memorial, except the riches which he has wantonly consumed.

Luxury engages all the world in her service: you would think there would be no artificers or manufacturers without her; and that the arts, the elements, and the seasons, must become tributary to her. This it is,

which overwhelms the luxurious man with pride; and makes him believe that he is the lord of the creation.

I earnestly hope, these considerations will make a due impression on your minds. Look on her without prejudice, and you will see that the pride which is so idolized, is more transient, than the cloud which passeth away; you will see, that there is nothing good to be expected from a man enslaved to vanity, and sunk in effeminacy.

That swarm of *petits maitres*, whom every man of sense despises, owes its origin only to pride; which fills them with the love of themselves: and thenceforth a new race of beings makes its appearance on the stage, exposing their vanity to all around them; and burthening society with all the charges of their existence.

But there is another dreadful effect of pride; which is, that it gives birth to those idle and mischievous books, which are continually publishing to the world, and which however harmless they may be thought, tend to vitiate the taste, and corrupt the morals. How many young people have been utterly ruined by improper books! If idleness and

the love of pleasure had not taken possession of their hearts, they would never have quitted that happy simplicity of manners, which inspires us with a love of truth, and teaches us to shun evil and pursue good.

There is yet another thing which I wish you to observe; namely, that you will insensibly loose your strength of mind, whenever you give yourselves up to the influence of pride: and what a ridiculous character is a soldier dissolved in luxury, and totally enervated? There remains nothing more of him than the shadow of a body: and an effeminate mind, to which the slightest hardship is a most insupportable evil. Accustomed to sleep under a richly decorated pavilion, to feed on the most delicate food, to be attended by a number of servants, he is either disqualified for the necessary duties of a soldier; or he carries to the camp a train of luxuries, which are ruinous to himself, and render him a bad example to others.

Surely, my dear children, you would not wish to be soldiers, merely to live in ease and splendor: were this the case, you would be loaded with reproaches; and your pride, far from procuring you respect, would only bring

you into contempt. A *petit maitre* is entirely out of his place, when he is called into the field of battle: his whims, his particularities, his delicacy, all serve to render him unhappy in himself, and ridculous to others. He is pointed at as one, who rather acts a part, than is really such as he ought to be.

Your good father has told me a thousand times, that those fine gentlemen, who are taken up in admiring themselves, running continually from one circle to another, and absolutely devoted to the business of the dressing room, were always considered as officers of no consequence or authority, whom the meanest soldier held in contempt. They can dance indeed, and they can sing, but they cannot fight; both because the art of war demands something more than mere personal courage, and because courage itself is weakened by the love of pleasure.

Look at the portraits of your ancestors: take notice of their suits of armour. Think ye, that the delicacy of the present age would have had any charms for them; and that they would have admired an officer scented with perfumes! Alas! how ingenious are we, only to make ourselves despised!

Leave pride to those who being suddenly grown rich, and struck with seeing themselves become men of consequence, and encircled with flatterers, place all their merit in gilded furniture, and splendid equipages. Neither a virtuous man, nor a man of quality, has any need of luxury to set him off. It is a great reflection on the present age to suppose that it only esteems men according to outward shew: whereas he alone is worthy of respect, whose character is distinguished by a noble simplicity.

Besides, how many real inconveniences do we suffer from this expensive turn of mind? Every part of our life savours of an uniform profusion: we are subject to a thousand forms and ceremonies; we are forced to pass our whole time in acting a part: we are surrounded by false friends, insolent servants, and almost always with anxiety, with debts and diseases.

It is very seldom that a man given up to pride and luxury, knows what sobriety is. Physicians have observed, that all, who live to the full, are subject to indigestions and apoplexies; and that it is this abundance, which generally shortens their lives. We no

onger regard our conduct, than while we live in a state of sobriety: as for pleasures, they are the chief executioners of the human race.

I thank Heaven that my health has enabled me to talk with you to-day with less difficulty than usual: you must have observed that my days are not all alike; and that oftentimes my spirits are depressed by the weakness of my body. I have now dwelt largely on my favourite subject of prudence, sobriety, and moderation: and if I have appeared tedious in my reflections, impute it to that tenderness, which makes me insensible of my sufferings, and which gives me new life, whenever I am endeavouring to instruct you.

In vain is death making daily advances on my emaciated body; in vain doth he every day rob me of a considerable part of my substance; I think myself in perfect health while you are with me: my concern is, to know how to endure the instant of our separation. I perceive the advances which it makes; yet I find at present no resources in my own strength to fortify me against that affecting moment.

But perhaps——alas! I only deceive myself; I feel nothing but death approaching.

The physician coming in, the children withdrew; and gave way to those effusions of grief, which the presence of their mother had suppressed.

The lady, having been at church in the morning, returned about eleven o'clock; and having summoned her children, she said, "I am just come from visiting my burial place, and from looking with my dying eyes on the sepulchre of your father. O! what pain has it given me to go through this solemn ceremony! But I was willing to humble that pride, which conceals from us what we are; and which would prove your ruin, should you not be careful to guard against its illusions. When we are brought up in the midst of human grandeur; it is very difficult to persuade ourselves, that we are like other men, and that the brightness which surrounds us will soon be dispersed like a vapour. In the mean time what have we, whereof we can justly glory? Alas! though you were nobly born, you came into the world weeping, helpless, and naked; and you must go out of it not less destitute of riches and honours. In vain will the world then offer you whatever is magnificent, and flattering to your vanity: all this

will pass away like a dream; and the grave will swallow up all your riches, pride, and greatness.

In my visit to your father's tomb, I saw nothing of all that glory which accompanied him on earth, and of all that homage which was paid him. Consigned to a little spot of ground, where silence and horror prevail, he has only a marble monument; which already begins to be effaced, and which would scarcely be seen, if we were not purposely directed to it.

Is this, then said I to myself, all that remains of the busy tumult of the world? Is it to this, that nobility of birth, and the most brilliant fortune lead?

Yes, my children, this is the sum of all our expectations, as to any thing earthly, whatever riches and dignities you enjoy. Death will place you on a level with the meanest of your fellow creatures; it will reduce you to dust similar to theirs, both in weight and value: keep then your eyes ever fixed on this period of human greatness.

It is this which will teach you that you are nothing but frailty; and that the pride, which is almost inseparable from an exalted

station, is the perfection of folly. Notwithstanding all the privileges of your birth, all your titles, and all your advantages, you cannot command a moment's existence: amid all your grandeur, you are in the power of the lowest men, of the elements which govern you, of the diseases which threaten you, and of a thousand accidents, which you cannot foresee. Your soul is as subject to sorrow, and your body to pain, as that of the meanest slave; and the poor peasant, whom perhaps you despise, enjoys the same sun, the same climate with yourself, and has the same faculties of sight, taste, and perception.

Why then, my children, should such a difference be made betwixt persons alike in so many respects? Is it because there is such a disparity in their birth? No, every one knows, that we all have one common father, that our origin is from the earth; and that many a man owes his eminence of station to instances of meanness, if not to downright wickedness.

Is it because they are consigned to live by the labour of their hands? In this they only fulfil the obligation universally laid upon mankind.—Is it because they are meanly cloath-

ed? Alas! what objects of pity are we, if we value ourselves upon being covered only with the spoils of brutes and insects!

What connexion is there betwixt that silk which is the produce of a worm, or that gold which we dig out of the bowels of the earth, and an immortal spirit? Surely we cannot make that splendour, which is only borrowed, the subject of pride and vanity. The poorest of our fellow creatures hath a body, and soul, and spirit, as well as we; from whence we ought to conclude that he is our brother: and that we are inferior to him in spite of all our grandeur and ambition: if he have more virtues, or nobler sentiments, than ourselves.

Hence learn, that you ought never to despise any one; and that he, upon whom you look down with disdain, may perhaps be endued with a more generous mind than all those great men of the world, who, while they value themselves on account of their superiority, are real objects of pity. How many are there, who, if they had an opportunity of shewing their abilities, would, by their genius and attainments, eclipse those men of fortune, who look down upon them with disdain! And whom the patronage of one man of rank,

or one fortunate circumstance, might have raised to that degree of honour to which their abilities entitled them!

It is therefore neither obscurity of birth, nor poverty, which lowers us in the eye of reason; but it is pride; because there is nothing which is in reality so abject, as this vice and its effects. It is always an indication either of a mean spirit, or a corrupt heart. How can we despise others, without casting at the same time a reflection on ourselves? But were this not the case; what, I pray you, do you think we lose of our riches or our quality, by receiving with a gracious air, all who approach us, and by addressing ourselves with condescension to our inferiors?

Alas! the man, who is foolishly puffed up with a sense of his own importance, loses by his haughty air, and his imperious mode of behaviour: for he loses the confidence and esteem of the worthy part of mankind, which is a valuable possession in the world.

Men of inferior rank are generally a match for those among their superiors, who treat them with contempt; for they are scarce out of their sight, before they ridicule their whims and pride, and make them the subject of their pleasantry and satire.

O! my children, if ever you should despise the least of your brethren, if ever you should treat them with disdain; you would dishonour the memory of your father. He never thought himself great, but when it gave him an opportunity of obliging others; and in him the weak and indigent found kindness and relief. He removed their sorrows; he answered them with gentleness: and if he found himself constrained to refuse them what they asked, he plainly shewed how much concern it gave him.

Remember that your elevated station stands in need of the assistance of men of inferior rank to support it; and that if you had not people in subjection to your commands, you would lead a life of the most dreary solitude, and of extreme indigence. Some labour to supply you with food, others offer you their personal service; and it is their presence and assiduous attendance which form your train, and render you an object of public notice.

We are therefore enemies to our own interest, when we despise those, on whom we are so dependent for assistance. The generality of great men are respected only, in proportion to their retinue; so that they owe almost all

portment. Men generally vow vengeance against those who think themselves raised above their fellow creatures, only to aggravate the miseries of the wretched; to overwhelm them with the weight of their pride; to make them the sport of their capricious humour; to oblige them to a painful attendance in antechambers, where they are wearied out with impatience and disgust. Every species of greatness, which is thus assuming, is nothing better than absolute tyranny.

To one who contemplates as I do at present, the majesty of GOD, how foolish as well as criminal doth the pride of man appear! How sensibly should I be afflicted, if I foresaw, that you would hereafter behave yourselves with insolence, and become distinguished by your haughty and imperious deportment! but I am persuaded, this will not be the case: you will rather endeavour to imitate the courtesy and affability of your father. And I trust you will acquit your mother of arrogance, if she should venture to urge her own example as not unworthy of your imitation in this respect.

Heaven, which knows my most secret thoughts, knows that I desire neither riches

nor honours for you: if you are only good men, you will be always sufficiently great.

O! my beloved children, if you could penetrate into my inmost thoughts, you could not doubt of my sincerity. I consider this union of hearts as the only means of being always together. Death may indeed destroy the body, but it has no power over the affection: this is my comfort, when the idea of our approaching separation depresses my spirits. It is then, I have recourse to my intelligent and immortal principle, in whose love and affection, as it were in a sanctuary, you are to live for ever, and make part of my happiness. It is then I console myself with reflecting, that I shall not absolutely be deprived of you; but that in spite of all the ravages of death, I shall retain you in my mind and affections. The triumph of the cruel tyrant will only be partial: under this persuasion, that our union is indissoluble, wonder not that my prayers to God are incessant, that he would preserve you, and pour down his choicest blessings upon you.

The more I think of you, the more I find myself interested in all you have, and do, and are; and it is this which heightens my

affection to an inexpressible degree, that you are my own flesh and blood. What stronger motive can there be most tenderly to love you?

I may truly say, I forget almost every other thing for your sakes: scarcely any thing, except my children's welfare, hath any longer a place in my heart. It is natural therefore for me, to avail myself of the little time I have to remain upon earth, by seeing as much of you as possible.

Excuse me, I pray you, to my friends, when I am departed hence. Tell them, that the duties of a parent so far surpassed every other, that I confined my attention entirely to my family, to give ease to my mind, and discharge my last duties. Assure them that they had nevertheless a share in my regard; and that the remembrance of their kindness dwelt on my mind to my last moment. Thank them for the attention which they have ever shewn me; and which, I am very sensible, was more than I deserved.

The sad commission which I am giving you to deliver to my friends, is like conversing with you after my death: ere long you will hear your mother spoken of as a shadow

that is departed; you will then recollect all my tenderness, and do justice to my love.

CONFERENCE XIV.

ON FRIENDSHIP.

I EXPECT the return of every evening with all the impatience that can be conceived. Neither the temporary relief of medicines, nor the cheering light of the sun, affords me any consolation; nothing can do this but the happy opportunity afforded me of seeing and conversing with you. You will hardly believe, that I reckoned every hour of the last night; only grieving that they did not pass with greater expedition, in order to hasten this pleasing interview. Surely my tenderness for you exceeds the bounds of reason; otherwise I could not presume, in my present situation, to wish that the time should pass with more rapidity than it does, when so very little remains for me: but let us improve that little; and let us discourse this evening on the necessity of prudence in the choice of our friends.

If we are right in saying that a true friend is a treasure; we may be equally sure that a false one is a monster. He abuses the confidence we place in him, to our injury; and makes sport of the affection which we shew him: there are hypocrites in friendship, as well as in religion.

But there is nothing, my children, more agreeable or useful to mankind than friendship: without this, the happiest life leaves a vacuum which can never be filled.

There are a thousand cases in which we have need of counsel or assistance; a thousand situations in which we derive comfort from the sight of a friend: he is a support in our adversity; a MENTOR, to recall our wandering steps.

Gentleness of manners, and a virtuous disposition, will secure to you all the blessings of friendship; but if you are not upon your guard against external appearances, you will run the risk either of having false friends, or of having no friend at all.

Your choice must not be determined either by an agreeable countenance, or a lively turn of conversation, or a brilliancy of wit; we are often ensnared by these exterior accom-

plishments. But experience will teach you, that there is nothing more deceitful than words and looks.

You must penetrate into the very soul of him whom you wish really to know: if you listen only to the public voice, you will find your judgment equally divided betwixt satire and panegyric, and you will not know which side to take. I never knew a person who had not his share of good and evil report. While some commend him, others blame him; and it is almost always prejudice which determines both the one and the other.

But how, you will ask, shall we get at the heart of him with whom we seek to be united in friendship? Your own understanding will teach you the way that will make you attentive to those words and actions which are purely natural, and unpremeditated; and which unfold the inmost recesses of the heart. That will teach you to watch the prevaling inclination of the person whom you wish to take into your bosom; and to attend to his different pursuits and connexions: that will shew you in that mirror of the mind, the *eyes*, whether there be sweetness, anger or pride in him.

It is easy to study others, when we have been accustomed to study ourselves; but unhappily, this self-inquiry is too much neglected. We read, with eagerness, books on every subject; but we do not give ourselves the trouble to search into that instructive volume, the human heart: thus it deceives us every moment; and makes us pay dearly for our negligence in this matter.

But, how great advantages would arise from this inquiry! We should know the origin of all the evil that we do; we should learn by what means our prevailing passions are most easily attacked; and we should have none but real friends.

Libertines and gamesters have those qualities which would only serve to ruin us. Not to mention that they are levity and inconsistency itself; they communicate a love of vice, and take a pleasure in making proselytes, like themselves. Every vicious man seeks to justify his conduct by the authority of others; and this he hopes to effect, by making converts: as if it were in the power of a multitude to determine virtue to be vice, or vice virtue.

It is not in the circle of irregularity, or in

the lap of pleasure, that you will meet with minds susceptible of true friendship: for she is prudent and discreet; and young men enslaved to their passions are intemperate and precipitate. You need not see them more than once, to know them thoroughly; they commend nothing but pleasure; they admire nothing but dissipation; they speak of nothing but what is injurious to religion and morality; all which are the strongest arguments against the admission of such persons into your friendship.

If you should make choice of one who is fond of play, he would soon pursuade you that his passion is a certain resource against dulness and misfortunes; that the gaming table is the rendezvous of the best company; that it is very agreeable to make such great interest of one's money; till, in short, he prevails, and you are undone. Connect yourself with a man of pleasure, and he will tell you there is no happiness but in sensual gratifications; and in the end will pervert your understanding, and corrupt your affections. One insensibly becomes wicked, by conversing with such as are wickedly disposed; this is an opinion confirmed by reason and sad experience.

An ill-disposed friend involves us in every kind of misfortune; and the wounds which he gives us are so much the more dangerous, because he often goes down with us into the pit which he has digged for us. His kindness ensnares us; and though we see we are the dupes of his folly, we have no longer resolution to oppose it.

I have already exhorted you to leave the choice of your friends to Virtue, which will preserve you from these dangers. She is intelligent, without suspicion, and has the best means of discovering the truth; such a choice is too important to excuse our inadvertency and neglect.

How many are there, whose fortune or whose virtue would have been ruined, had it not been for the assistance of a friend! he becomes their guide; he shews them a safe and easy way, and his directions are attended with the most happy effects. We easily suffer ourselves to be persuaded, when it is Friendship that speaks: she knows the dispositions of the heart, and discovers herself in spite of every cloud and every impediment.

How happy will you be, if ever you are blessed with a real friend! He will be a liv-

ıg book, in which you may read your duty; ıd your own affection being joined with his, ıere will be only one mind, and one will be- ıixt you. When we are united with gen- rous sentiments, we mutually encourage ıch other to every thing that is good: there ı something sacred in friendship, when it is nimated by virtue.

But we must not expect to find true friends, we do not use our utmost endeavours to de- ırve them. There is nothing more common ıan to hear people complain of the scarcity f friends, and nothing more rare that to see ıem studious to cultivate friendship. We ·e not apt to think that friendship is a com- ıèrce, which must be carried on at a mutual xpense.

Do not accustom yourselves to call any ıan your friend, whom you have not proved, ıd whom you do not know to be such: be ɔnest, sincere, and agreeable yourselves: ıd I will be answerable for it, that the bless- ıgs of friendship shall be yours. We form ɔnnexions too hastily to have real friends; ıd we change them too often, to know their ılue: there is too much levity to be met ith every where, and only the shadow of iendship to be seen.

What a dismal state is it, to wander about the world, without a creature in whom we can safely confide! to live always in reserve with those whom we converse with. A true friend delivers us from this restraint: he is of more value to us, than all the world, without him. While we see and converse with him, we think of nothing that is removed at a distance from us.

I myself experienced the blessing of a friend in one whom Providence threw in my way, when I was young: her counsels and her excellent virtues first began to shew me the folly and vanity of a dissipated life. I trust her goodness towards me has not failed of its reward! Were she now alive, she would supply my place to you; my eyes have a thousand times bestowed the tribute of a tear upon her; and to my latest breath I shall not cease to regret her loss.

It was in the friendship of this excellent woman, that I learnt to raise my mind above the trifles of the world; and that I found by experience that our happiness chiefly depends on the choice of a friend.

Indeed, my children, a virtuous person to whom we can at all times with safety unbo-

om ourselves, is of more use to us, than either books or conversation; when we are agitated by our passions, we seek an asylum in his breast, and find that tranquillity which we so much want.

Only make your observation on two faithful friends; listen to them, and you will find in their language and their sentiments a degree of candour and benevolence that will charm you. If they descant on the emptiness of earthly honours, it is the voice of reason; if they give an account of their affairs, it is done with the utmost openness and integrity. They adhere closely to the dictates of virtue; the strongest supports the weaker: the wiser instructs the more ignorant; each is content with his own measure of knowledge: and in this little society, neither wishes the pre-eminence.

I should not say so much on the subject of friendship, if it were not so absolutely necessary in human life. Of what service may you find a friend, amidst the perils of war! It is very possible that he may save your life; we see instances of it every day: your uncle can inform you, that after a bloody battle he was found fallen among the dead; and that the

Count de ——, instigated by friendship, came to see if there were any signs of life in him, and delivered him from the hands of those who were preparing to bury him.

You are now arrived at a proper age to think of making such friends: a friendship begun in our youth is a band not easily to be broken. Experience will teach you that the generality of persons whom you meet with in the world are only fit for the intercourse of common civility; and that the number of those among whom a friend is to be chosen, is very small. Let this choice be directed by reason, as well as the affections; and you will never then have cause to repent of it.

We are never more sensible of the true value of a friend, than when we labour under any sickness or misfortune. The courtier passes by, and does not remember that he ever saw you; the man of the world sends to inquire after you, and proceeds no farther: but the real friend risks every thing; nay quits every thing, to assist and comfort you. He divides himself, he multiplies himself; he knows no greater pleasure than in opening his heart, and discovering the sincerity of his affection: we are always ready to disclose our

earts, when we have nothing but virtues to hew.

Heaven grant that these reflections may mprint on your minds those sentiments which riendship inspires. This is the wish of your est and dearest friend, who delights in seeng you; whose heart is transported with leasure in conversing with you! I am already absolutely dead to the world: it is only n you, that I seem to live and breathe. O! ny too tenderly beloved children! to what an orphan state are you now about to be reduced! Where are the persons, whom you will hereafter call by the sacred name of friends? How happy should I be to know them! How extremely dear would they be to me! I should consider them as supplying my place in your affections. I should conjure them to be forever attached to you; both out of tenderness for you, and compassion for me.

Alas! my whole soul is disordered by such reflections as these: all my thoughts are thrown into confusion. And nothing remains to me, but the pain of losing you; a pain which has yet a mixture of pleasure, even while it overwhelms me: and which, indeed,

I would not but feel, for all the world.

That ever I should be destined to experience such a contrariety of sensations! My heart seems to be divided, and my soul is in a state of distraction; my tenderness is agitated at the same time by sentiments of a quite different nature; what a strange situation! My love of my children, whilst it heightens my joy, embitters my sorrow. If my affection is properly returned by you, I shall have abundant reason to be satisfied; yet do I still lament your fate.

CONFERENCE XV.

ON THE COURT.

AS it is my design to give you some instructions in relation to every circumstance of your life; I think I ought to say something to you on the subject of the Court. The spot which you will have occasion most frequently to visit, is the residence of the sovereign.—Thence it is, that favours and benefits are wont to flow.

But you must know that self-love, and our own interest, being the first mover almost in every action, they who frequent the court are carried thither by motives of ambition, and a thirst for promotion: this is the center to which every thing tends. It is here that the vehemence of desire, and the flame of passion are kindled: here it is that courtiers pine away with envy and impatience; and there is scarcely any one, who does not feel himself in an uneasy situation. One is afraid of losing his place, another is apprehensive that he shall get nothing; and as neither of them will venture to utter his real sentiments, either that he may not expose himself, or that he may not reveal his secret, they both live in a state of perpetual dissimulation.

This accounts for our finding more suspicion and mistrust at court than any where else; and hence it is that it is the place in the world in which men are least apt to express their thoughts and inclinations. When this precaution does not exceed the bounds of prudence, we cannot but commend it; but when it degenerates into duplicity it is doubtless a very great fault.

Expect then to find, within the precincts

of a court only persons of very great prudence or dissimulation; and to see only looks, whose meaning you cannot understand. They often laugh, when they have great cause to weep; and sometimes weep, when they have occasion to rejoice. They publicly praise their enemies, if they happen to be favourites at court; and they censure even their friends, if they chance to be out of favour. Fortune is the compass by which the course of their friendship is directed; the thermometer, which shews the degree of warmness or coolness, with which people are to be addressed.

You will see, that neither openness nor freedom are the current coin of this place; and that the only way to maintain your ground there, is to pay a proper respect to all, but to place confidence in none. Never to say the least evil of any because the weakest has power to hurt; to confine yourselves within your proper sphere; and to have nothing to do with intrigues or cabals. To ask no favours, or at least to use the utmost discretion in asking them; to give no occasion either for panegyric or satire. Equally to avoid the haughty appearance of pride, and the mean artifices of flattery: to preserve at all times an even-

ness of temper; and never to shew too much sensibility. People are apt to mistrust a man of wit and humour: they suppose that he is always designing: and they suspect that what he says is not sincere.

Lay down these maxims for the direction of your conduct; and I will venture to assure you, that whatever dangers may attend the court, it will have none to ensnare you. It is not the path of ambition which I am pointing out to you; but that of an honest man, who seeks to get the better of his own faults, and only aspires after true happiness. The ambitious man hazards all for all: if his exaltation may render him conspicuous, his fall may be utterly destructive to him. Whereas, with virtue, and a generous moderation, we leave fortune to act as she pleases; neither coveting her favours, nor dreading her frowns.

It is doubtless a very pleasing situation to be honoured with the confidence of our country, and to be employed in her name to partake of the concerns of government. But how much trouble and disappointment must you expect, before you arrive at such a post of honour! And what perpetual inquietude must you suffer, to maintain it! You will not have

a moment, that you can call your own; your time must be wholly devoted to the public affairs. And you must be intent on justifying the choice which your country has made of you, by incessant industry, and by an unwearied anxiety for the general welfare.

I have seen enough of the court, and of the manners of courtiers, to be able to assure you, that no one there is happy, but he who desires nothing.

When we are only engaged in consulting the interest of our country, we find a court the residence of true greatness and virtue; but when we think only of our own interest, we find there nothing but intrigues and jealousy, and dissimulation. It is not sovereigns or their families, which render the court a place of danger; but the faulty passions which we carry thither, and which an ambitious desire of advancement puts in a state of fermentation. A prince cannot see every thing himself; and as the greatest part of his courtiers are accustomed to disguise, his court does not appear to him such as it really is.

You must above all things beware of learning there that political refinement, which has not the least connexion with truth; that fond-

ness for luxury, which plunges us into idle expenses; that effeminacy which enervates both the body and mind; that haughtiness of spirit, which knows no pleasure, but that of depressing others. A good disposition will imitate nothing but virtues; bad examples serve only to render it more circumspect and attentive to its duty.

If it be true, that a court has its inconveniences, it is not less true that it has also great advantages: it is the centre of true politeness; it is the residence of the purest language; a certain mode of behaviour there prevails, which is not elsewhere to be found, and which characterises persons of quality. It is there we become acquainted with the necessary forms, and what is usually called ETIQUETTE: the manner of behaving ourselves with gracefulness, and of expressing ourselves with propriety; of receiving others with dignity, and of writing with elegance and ease. You will not have continued there long, without learning the art of being polite without impertinence, reserved without stiffness, steady without rudeness, and grave without affectation. Courtiers say many things in few words; they know every thing, yet pretend

to know nothing; that is, they are so guarded, that you can neither guess what are their real sentiments, nor quote their authority for what they say.

Choose those characters for your examples, which are most generally esteemed: there are to be found at court, venerable peers, whose company is the school of honour and integrity; respectable ladies, whose example is a lesson of virtue. These are the persons to whom you will do well most intimately to attach yourselves: you will gain their good will by listening to them with attention; by frequenting their company; by a well supported conduct, and by modesty and discretion. The court is only dangerous to those who give themselves up to pleasure or ambition; we can every where find bad examples, when we give ourselves the trouble to look after them.

If you should have a place at court, you will do well to remember that it is only borrowed; and be always ready to resign it: This will be the surest means of confirming you in it, and of securing you from any fear of revolutions.—Courts are like ground that is undermined: when we think ourselves most secure, we are in the most imminent danger of falling in.

If you only appear there to pay the respect which is due from you; if you are only anxious to procure esteem, behave yourselves with politeness to all the world: and above all things avoid the character of news-mongers, or banterers; the least degree of raillery is always ill received. The court is the residence of extreme discretion; they are always talking there, without affirming any thing.

There is no place in the world in which there is more wit; and in which it is more dangerous to shew it. Shew nothing there but plain good sense; that you will find, is the way to commit no faults, and to have no enemies: we cannot be too circumspect, when we live in the midst of a world, in which every thing is seen, and every thing is blazed abroad.

Never boast that you have interest, if fortune should give it you: either you will be beset by dependants, whose applications you must refuse, and which a good heart suffers greatly in refusing; or you must be always asking favours, and thereby weakening your own interest.

Avoid the society of intriguing women; they almost always ruin those whom they ap-

pear to protect. Their counsels seduce; they fan the flames of ambition; and all they aim at is to form parties, of which you will at length become the victim.

Pay no regard to the friendship which they profess for you, or to the questions which they will not fail to ask you. Their friendship may be sincere, but it may perhaps be insidious; and in a matter of doubt, prudence prescribes that we steer clear of danger. There are too many jarring interests at court, to think that people there, are disinterested.

What I am now recommending to you is not craftiness but prudence; you will not be less the friends to truth, for knowing how to hold your peace, and act with reserve: it is a kind of policy which religion allows, and which it calls by the name of discretion.

We find fault with the court, as being the region of toilsome attendance and fatigue: and not without reason, when we give ourselves up to idleness and pleasure. But if you are fond of reading, and make temperance the rule of your conduct; you will find yourselves as happy there as in any other place. Satiety belongs only to those who pursue sensual pleasures alone, and who wish

to be always enjoying them: let *your* happiness centre in your own minds, and it will always then be at your command.

But enough, my children, on this subject; experience will teach you the rest: she is an admirable instructress; and it is to her I refer myself, every time I converse with you. But it is impossible for you to conceive what agitation my mind sustains, while I am giving you these directions for your future conduct. I cannot help wishing to look into futurity, that I might know whether the counsel which I give you is exactly such as will be of use to you hereafter; or whether you will be disposed to follow it at all. I am always thinking, and therefore it is no wonder that I am incessantly repeating, how dreadful is the situation of that mother, who wishes to attend her children through their whole life, but is obliged to leave them: who is earnestly desirous to know in what manner they will hereafter conduct themselves: what will become of them: and yet cannot, with all her efforts of foresight and tenderness, go one step beyond the present hour.

It is a melancholy reflection, that I am at this time anxious to give you advice for the

regulation of a life, which perhaps will very soon be taken away from you. Who knows, alas! but that the first campaign may carry you off, in the midst of all your hopes; and in the flower of that youth, of which you are at present in the full enjoyment. Some unexpected accident may perhaps open *your* tomb almost as soon as mine is shut. Such are the sad reflections, which distract my mind; arising, doubtless, in part, from the increasing weakness of my outward frame. They hang over me like a thick cloud, which I am unable to remove.

To my own lot I am no stranger; my present solicitude arises from my ignorance what will be yours. O! that death would execute all its powers upon me, rather than torment me with these melancholy thoughts, which cast down my soul and fill me with disquiet.

Heaven has ordained, my children, that I should be taken away from you at a time when I am deeply impressed with a sense of my duty, and am exceedingly desirous to discharge it.—Alas! how many mothers are there, who live in perfect indifference about their children! how many mothers, who only regard their pleasures; while I have this great

reason for wishing to live, that I might be of use to you: and that I might be instrumental in preserving you from those dangers to which your youth is about to be exposed!

Grievous indeed was the stroke, when it was the will of Heaven to deprive you of your father; it now seemeth good to the same unsearchable wisdom, to double your affliction.—Submit therefore in all humility, to that dispensation, which not the most costly sacrifices, nor all that your affection could possibly prompt you to bestow, will be able to avert.

But what do I say? You may perhaps imagine, that the prospect of death disquiets me; whereas death has utterly lost its sting. You will not, I hope, suspect that I am unwilling to submit to the will of Providence, all whose designs I humbly and reverently adore. Pardon, gracious Lord, the expiring efforts of parental affection; which overcomes me, in my present state of languor, and decay.

CONFERENCE XVI.

ON THE LOVE OF TRUTH.

THE subject of this evening's conversation shall be that infalliable characteristic of a generous mind, the love of Truth. You cannot but know that nothing is more detestable than falsehood; and that whoever deviates from truth, is held in utter contempt.

Be assured, my dear children, you will no longer be esteemed than while you strictly adhere to truth. The world, corrupt as it is, never yet spoke of a liar with respect; it even protests against those flattering compliments which lead us to commend those who are unworthy of praise: so certain is it that truth is always acceptable, and that her rights are never to be invaded with impunity.

What would you say of me, my children, if you found that the affection which I profess to bear towards you, was all dissembled! and that my words were the language of an impostor! that the regret which I have ex-

pressed at being removed from you, and seeing you no more, was merely the effect of artifice and insincerity! Doubtless you would be offended to see me trifle with truth, and prostitute parental affection. But be assured, the contrary is true; each word that I utter, is the dictate of sincerest love; nor do I think it necessary to justify myself in this respect.

Alas! of what use would it be to me, to assume the character of an anxious or afflicted mother? This would be far enough from giving you pleasure; nor can I have the least interest in imposing on you. If I wished to do it, in order to make myself of some consequence in the world, death is about to remove me from it; and I have nothing here below to expect, but the stroke it is about to give me.

Consigned in a very short time to the regions of eternal silence, I shall neither know what is said, nor what is thought of me. None of the concerns of this life will any longer affect me, except, perhaps the love which I bear you; and which will, I hope, be perfected in endless joy, on seeing you again, received into the regions of eternal life.

That Truth, which is so amiable and con-

spicuous upon earth, is no other than an emanation from, and as it were, the image of, the Deity: and the reason why we hold it in such high estimation is, because we know that it proceeds from heaven. How great is its beauty, how clear its light, when it penetrates the heart and soul! From the moment of its entrance, the mind becomes the seat of equity and candour. All writings which are destitute of truth, are calculated only to mislead; all men who disregard it in their manners or discourse, are objects of our pity or contempt.

Let truth then be the guide of your conduct, the first principle of your actions, as hereby a very material point will be gained: you will not then suffer yourselves to be seduced by evil customs, or bad companions; your character will not then be marked by dissimulation and duplicity; your words, and looks, and actions will be uniformly true.

You have happily chosen those stations in life in which truth is more particularly indispensible: a soldier without the strictest honour, and an ecclesiastic without the most rigid veracity, are men so truly infamous, that they are looked upon with indignation. Honesty

knows but one kind of language. When we have recourse to equivocal expressions, we no longer deserve to be esteemed strictly honest; we are not indeed obliged always to speak all kinds of truth; but we are never allowed to say any thing which is not true.

It is because men are too apt to lose sight of these maxims that the world is full of flattery and insincerity. You may observe, that unfortunately there seems to be a kind of emulation in the art of deceiving one another; and that almost in every company the shocking custom is but too prevalent, of praising people to their faces, and censuring them the moment their backs are turned.—This species of treachery has always been exceedingly offensive to me; especially because the party so treated, being absent, is unable to defend himself: it is cutting a man's throat without allowing him the possibility of crying out for succour.

Your father, whose example I always propose to you with pleasure, because I well knew his excellent qualities; your father, I say, had an utter abhorrence of liars and evil-speakers. He considered them as birds of prey, which only seek to surprise and devour:

the liar lays his snares, the slanderer stabs you with a dagger.

O how amiable is truth! her empire ran parallel with the Golden Age: the tongue was then the faithful interpreter of the heart; then mutual love prevailed, and each party expressed it without disguise. The world, as it grows old, grows more corrupt; the very nature of truth is changed; and falsehood too often dwells on the lips even of those who have had every advantage of education.—What, in fact, are all idle compliments, but the art of saying agreeable things which mean nothing, and of lulling people into an utter insensibility of their faults? I would by no means have you rigidly severe; but I would never have you sacrifice truth to complaisance. Truth is an inexhaustible spring, from which innumerable streams are derived, whose purity may be defiled many different ways. Some depart from it by equivocation: some by mental reservations: neither of them recollecting, that to be a lover of truth is the greatest ornament of man.

Such language, I well know, would be incomprehensible to mere courtiers; but I hope I am not giving instructions to persons who

are ambitious of that sort of life. The principles which I am inculcating, will never introduce you to it; if they do, my instructions must be strangely misunderstood. Nothing would affect me more than to know that my children would be mean flatterers, capable of deceiving their master, and of betraying the interests of the public. The very idea fills me with horror. No—Heaven, I trust, will not suffer ambition to take such possession of your hearts, as to lead you to any unwarrantable excess. That you may never run into it, shall be my constant prayer; and your good dispositions give me cause to hope that my wishes will be accomplished.

If you improve in knowledge and virtue, as I hope you will, you will be sensible of the importance of keeping your word, and never contradicting your real sentiments. What is it but to act in two opposite characters, when we outwardly approve what we inwardly condemn?

If he, who is regardless of truth, knew what he loses by his want of uprightness and integrity, he would account himself unworthy of society. It is impossible to esteem such a person; no one ventures to entrust him with

the most trifling secret; and even when he speaks the truth, he is not believed. Other vices may be concealed, but falsehood is almost always discovered; and oftentimes the liar is betrayed by himself.

Receive instruction on this point from those old officers whose names are an honour to their profession; and you will know how to regard truth as she deserves. It is in their school we learn that our life itself is not too dear a price to lay down in her behalf; that esteem is the companion of integrity; and that every promise which we make, without performing it, is an instance of falsehood which deserves to be punished.

In proportion as I enter more deeply into reflections upon death, I discover how necessary it is to regard truth. No person in my situation can avoid most highly respecting her, and renouncing every species of falsehood and dissimulation. They may indeed be found in books, or in society; but in the eyes of those who stand on the brink of the grave, they are lighter than vanity itself. Such persons esteem nothing more than veracity. Adhere to it, my children, as long as you live, and the blessing of heaven will rest

upon you. Hate evil speaking; and be as slow to believe, as you are backward to utter, any thing to the disadvantage of another.

Truth affords the greatest delight to a person of a liberal mind: he finds it in himself, and among all his friends: because he is connected only with such as endeavour, like himself, to be pure and upright.

All I have to add, is, that if a single instance of falsehood would establish your fortune, you ought to prefer a life of indigence before wealth so dearly purchased. Honour and religion unite their influence in recommending this love of truth: it may not perhaps be altogether fashionable to think, and act thus; but your lives are not to be regulated by the dictates of fashion.

The exertion of my spirits in conversing with you on these interesting topics, may perhaps hasten my death a few days; but what is such a loss to a mother who would freely sacrifice ages for your good, if she had them at her disposal? I know I can only remain upon earth, so long as I continue to live in your hearts; and that the way to do this, is to store them with my sentiments.

Restrain your tears, I beseech you; and

let me not suffer what is worse than death, by seeing you overwhelmed with excessive grief: it is enough for me to die myself, without seeing you in danger of being the victims of immoderate sorrow on my account. It is true, you will very soon be orphans; but you will be the objects of the divine protection: his Providence never fails to watch over those who apply to him for succour with an honest and upright heart.

I have lived about nine and thirty years; and there have been thousands whose lives would have been more useful than mine, who were not permitted to live so long. I should have been too happy, if I had lived to see you settled in the world; and had chosen myself the parts which you were destined to perform. Gracious Heaven! whither doth this reflection carry me? O! painful affection which adds to the weight of my sufferings, and embitters the dregs of the cup of death.

CONFERENCE XVII.

ON BROTHERLY LOVE.

UNDER an hourly apprehension of death, I am astonished to find myself again conversing with you. Who can less reckon upon the return of to-morrow, than one who is already reduced to a skeleton? It is the will of Heaven that the undue attention which I have formerly paid to this wretched body of mine, should be recompenced by my being an eye witness of its total decay: wherever I turn my eyes I see nothing but the sad tokens of my approaching dissolution.

There are, however some instructions, which I yet wish to give you; and that which I intend for the present is not one of the least importance. It relates to the harmony which ought to subsist betwixt you all; and without which, you must never expect any peace or comfort in each other. I have therefore called you *all* together, because the present subject of my instructions equally concerns you all: this union only can repair the loss

you will sustain by the death of your parents, and it will deliver you from a thousand inconveniences and embarrassments.

All families go to decay, when they are distracted by law suits; they are torn asunder, they devour each other, they mutually wish each other's ruin: where a cordial affection does not subsist, there is nothing but confusion. I have seen some great families reduced by this to indigence: a wretched self-interested spirit had sowed tares in the heart of each individual belonging to them.

It is covetousness which embroils the nearest relations; for the sake of a little pelf, men are contented to break the bonds of consanguinity and friendship: whereas the treasures of the whole universe are not worthy to be compared with the happiness of living in peace and unity.—Alas! poor mortals of a day! how solicitous are they about their earthly concerns, as if they were to dwell upon the earth for ever!

With what deep concern should I be filled, if I foresaw that my property could possibly be the occasion of strife betwixt you! I should in that case, wish with all my heart, to have no other inheritance to leave you, but peace

and virtue; but, I flatter myself, *meum* and *tuum*, that wretched distinction which so often separates chief friends, will never be allowed to interrupt your friendship. Nothing upon earth should be permitted to violate the bond of brotherly love.

Sprung from the same parents, brothers naturally contract the most intimate union from their very birth. This friendship often grows up amidst their exercises, and their sports; and increases as their hearts unfold themselves, and their affections are enlarged. An husband has not always known his wife; oftentimes indeed he knows little or nothing of her, before marriage. But brothers and sisters have had the same cradle, the same examples, the same instructions, and have lived in the same way; so that they are doubly to blame, if any matter of interest be suffered to divide them. The more inducements we have to live in union, the more clearly do we demonstrate the evil disposition of our hearts, when we give the least encouragement to dissension.

If ever you should be tempted to disagree with each other, you will do well to estimate, what it would cost you to support your ani-

mosity, through the forms of a tedious and expensive law suit: and I will answer for it, that you will never be induced to carry matters to this cruel extremity. Alas! the voice of consanguinity is not suppressed with impunity: she always maintains her rights; and a generous mind can never forget them, without doing the utmost violence to itself.

I have ever observed with the utmost satisfaction and delight, your affectionate disposition towards each other; and I am persuaded that the harmony which hath hitherto prevailed betwixt you, has been as much the effect of congenial sentiments, as of your own good sense. I thank heaven for it; and earnestly beseech you to preserve this concord uninterrupted. Remember, that if it be conducive to your present advantage to be united it will not less contribute to your future satisfaction: the longer such an union continues the firmer it will become, and the more sensible you will be of the blessings which attend it.

Alas! how many unhappy families are there, who have broken the bonds of friendship, are restrained, by a false shame, from mutual concessions, for the sake of restoring

peace! Self-interest must have a strange ascendency over our hearts, before the early impressions of love and friendship can be thoroughly effaced, so as to cool our affections towards those whom we once cordially loved.

I declare to you, I feel in my heart so many reasons for the love of a brother, that it does not appear to me possible to entertain any sentiment like aversion towards him: if I am mistaken, I hope you will always be in the same error with myself.

O! if you once taste the pleasure of an intimate union with each other, nothing can be equal to your satisfaction: your harvest will be crowned with peace; your property will be in a manner common; there will be only one heart, and one soul betwixt you. We despise brothers who quarrel with one another; and chicanery employs all her arts to ruin them both.

Virtue is only to be found in the regions of peace and love: every kingdom, divided against itself, will be brought to desolation. Rather give up a portion of your goods, than forfeit the blessings of peace: this example was set you by your father. He chose rather to recede from his just rights, than to enga[illegible]

in a law-suit with his near relations; such conduct is highly worthy of your imitation.

We are all ready enough to bewail the dismal effects of those wars, which, for the sake of an accession of territories, plunge whole nations into the depths of misery and destruction. And yet for a few yards of land we persecute each other without remorse: can there be a greater inconsistency than this?

The world abounds with persons, who, inheriting the estates of their friends, neglect to discharge the most sacred duties, in order to gratify their boundless desires. The departed friend is no sooner interred, than they seize on his effects with the utmost eagerness, and insist on the privilege of plundering his house. Could I think you capable of such rapacity; I would rather wish that you should take possession of every thing I have, while I live, than dishonour both yourselves and me, by quarrels after my death. My riches are yours; and I should really be pleased to have you make an immediate division of them among yourselves: I shall want very little for the short time I have to live.

There is something horrible in the love of money: it breaks the strongest ties, it is ut-

terly regardless of the cries of the wretched; it despises the censures of the world; it leads us into the greatest crimes. When we thirst after riches, we despise virtue as a thing of naught: even the soul itself is disregarded, when this passion is predominant; hence so many estates indirectly obtained! hence so many instances of inhumanity to the distressed.

But what is a palace, however brilliant, in which there is neither peace nor virtue? It is the seat of tumult and wickedness, in the eye of reason; how much better it is to dwell in an humble cottage, and enjoy the blessings of concord and tranquility!

The riches which we acquire by dishonest means, are seldom of a long duration. Heaven oftentimes, no doubt as a punishment for the possessors, causeth them to pass away like a vapour; every inheritance becomes in some sort unlawful, when we only possess it by dissolving the ties of family affection.

I thank God, that covetousness never took possession of my heart; I always considered that vice, as the portion of a base mind. If your sentiments are not sordid, you will think the same: the love of your relations will ap-

pear in your eyes far preferable to all the treasures in the world; and you will never think yourselves truly rich, but when those who are nearest allied to you are your *best* friends. What a comfort is it to live in the midst of those of our own family, without discord, without mistrust, and to be able to find, within the circle of our own relations, all the assistance we stand in need of! This indeed deserves the name of true happiness.

What can I do more, my dear children, to inspire you with the love of unity and peace; except it be to desire you will approach the couch on which you see your mother almost expiring! In this very room it was, that I implored the mercy of heaven towards you, the moment you were born; that your souls might be filled with wisdom and benevolence: and hither must you direct your eyes, that you may incessantly recall the powerful motives, which ought to unite you to each other. Consider these walls, as ready to witness against you; if you should ever presume to violate the bands of fraternal affection.

As for you my beloved daughter, I recommend you most earnestly to the kind attention of your brothers; who I trust will pity the

dangerous situation of your tender youth, and always continue inviolably attached to you. And do you on your part, never forget that your happiness may greatly depend on cultivating their friendship. Reject with scorn, the advice of such as would————But I must cease; a cloud this moment overspreads me, which darkens both my visual and intellectual sight. Adieu!————my anxiety for you will prove more fatal to me, than the disease under which I labour: it urges me to speak at a time when the extremity of my weakness will not suffer me to proceed! What a struggle betwixt them both!

CONFERENCE XVIII.

ON RELIGION.

A DAY in my present weak state, is too precious to be passed over by me, without employing it in discoursing with you on the subject of religion; in explaining to you what it is, and what are the demands which it

makes upon you. I am thankful for that measure of divine knowledge which has taught me that nothing can equal the happiness of being engaged in the service of GOD. Be assured, you will never be happy but while you live in obedience to His laws.

All the instructions which I have hitherto given you, would be very defective indeed, if they did not lead you to Christianity. An honest and an amiable man are only sketches of virtue: religion must fill up, and finish the picture.

I will not enter upon a discussion of the several kinds of religious worship. It is sufficient to say, that we believe Christianity to be established on the foundation of reason, scripture, and truth; and that they who have presumed to level their attacks against it, are scattered as the dust before the wind. This is a fact which history will sufficiently attest, and of the truth of which you will be thoroughly convinced, if you read it with attention: it is only the strength of our passions which blinds our sight in this matter.

I never knew a man of real virtue decry religion; men only attack its precepts and instructions, because it prescribes mortification

and self-denial. The libertine condemns religion only to revenge himself on it for the restraints which it lays upon him: he is like a man who, having been cast in a law-suit, endeavours to defend himself, by accusing his judges of partiality and iniquity.

If ever you listen to such people, and adopt their idle objections to the truth, you are undone: your hearts will soon be corrupted; like the heart of that fool upon sacred record, who presumed to say in it, "There is no God." We begin with listening to blasphemy, and we finish, with uttering it ourselves.

When I am tormented with frightful apprehensions on this subject, my comfort is, that you have had the blessing of a Christian education: I recall to my remembrance those holy sacraments whereby you have been initiated and strengthened; those resolutions, by which you have so often engaged yourselves to serve your GOD with fidelity. All these considerations fill me with a confident assurance, that my children will continue faithful members of the church in which they were born and educated; and never dishonour the Religion of their Saviour by an immoral or irreligious conduct.

Indeed if I had any doubts in this matter, I should weep incessantly for you; my soul would be cast down with the most horrible inquietude: and I should be ready to curse the very day, in which I brought you into the world. I should no longer be a mother, most tenderly attached to her children; but a wretched woman that had given them up, to vindicate the honour of GOD. O! how infinitely are both you and myself indebted to Him! how wonderfully doth He vouchsafe to comfort and support, even me, who am but dust and ashes. How, good Heavens! can I sufficiently acknowledge this great mercy!

It is the Christian religion alone, which intimately unites us with the Deity. While we walk under the direction of her light, we are in no danger of losing our way; we find her present in all our necessities. She never forsakes us in any of our distresses; she makes us amends for all the losses we sustain; she attends us, even to the grave; in her bosom we live, in her arms we expire.

Religion sanctifies our actions; and furnishes the soul with infinite consolation, by setting before it the hope of an everlasting Recompence. In what deep distress should

I now be involved, if, being about to lose you, whom I love more dearly than myself, I had no resource in the treasures of heaven! A fatal despair would seize upon my soul; I should sink into the horrors of annihilation, and should expire full of rage and fury.

But, O my GOD, the confidence which I have, that I shall see and enjoy Thee, calms my grief and assures me, that in Thee I have what is much more precious to me than the whole universe, even more than my children themselves, though so exceedingly dear to me.

Thus it is that our holy religion flies to our succour in the midst of evils; the more afflictive they are, the more abundant are her consolations. How happy will you be, if you observe her maxims! nothing can then render you miserable.—You will perceive the hand of GOD in every occurence of your life, however trivial in appearance: you will acknowledge his wisdom in every leaf that shooteth, in every insect that creepeth, in every grain of dust that you tread under your feet; you will know that He is the Author of life and death; that he directs our thoughts, listens to our sighs, enables us to behold and to declare the wonders of his Providence.

How many days, alas! have I passed out reflecting on these truths! The wo a stream, which always carries us away from God, and from ourselves.

In the eyes of the man of this world ligion is a mere engine of state policy profane wit treats it as a fable. But to who listens to its dictates, and learns fr to renounce his passions, it is no other truth itself. Consider it as your duty t come acquainted with religion; she fear thing, except that men should be ignora her excellence.

In vain hath imposture painted Christi in the falsest colours; it cannot name a s error, which she approves; or point out gle truth, which she condemns; or can a stance be produced of any one, who eve pented of being a Christian. Self-rep is the portion only of those perverse men, scoff at religion: scarce doth a fit of sick seize them, but they smite upon their br in despair, and bewail their impiety. moment of death, is that of truth. If reli would tolerate vice, they, who are now bitterest adversaries, would represent h lovely and delightful, and earnestly esp her cause.

I need not tell you, that it is not necessary to practice works of piety, in order to procure the character of an honest man; it is sufficient for this purpose merely to abstain from injuring your neighbour: but honesty is always in danger of being lost, when it is not supported by religion. When we do not admit into our system, a Deity, who takes cognizance of our actions; and who will either reward or punish us; we live like brute creatures; we give the reins to our lusts in every action, which we hope will escape the eyes of men.

Only observe those unbelievers, who live without faith and hope; attend a little to their words, and actions: their system of morality is abominable; and if their manners are corrupt, this is only a necessary consequence. The fear of man is not a sufficient bridle to restrain us; it may sometimes hinder evil actions, but it lays no restraint on evil desires.

Irreligion leads to all kinds of excess: in her estimation, the most horrid crimes are softened into gallantry. And the soul itself, O! dreadful imagination! that soul, which was created in the image of God, is only a particle of matter, which death is about to annihilate! See to what height this new philoso-

phy raises us! you cannot consider it, without horror.

. Is it possible, Lord, that my mind should be filled with such exalted ideas of thy perfections, with so ardent a desire of being forever united to thee; and that after all, my lot should be that of a crawling insect? Is it possible, that religion, the practice whereof is so holy; whose outward appearance is so amiable; which has filled me with so much comfort; which inspires me with so much resolution, in the midst of my sorrows and afflictions: is it possible, that such a religion should be a mere illusion and chimæra. Away with such deceitful dreams! My flesh may decay, and my tomb open itself to receive me; but I foresee a never-ending life awaits me: and the GOD, whom I adore, will crown me with unspeakable joy, if I am so happy as to depart this life in his fear and love.

O! my dear children, this idea already fills my soul with transport; methinks I already see Time end, and Eternity————But suffer me, a moment, to give up my whole attention to this sublime subject; and suffer me for a while to forget the world, and to *think* only of Heaven.—

Here she continued lost for some time in the depth of her reflections; but afterwards recovering herself, she resumed her discourse.

Nature has certainly made *you* more dear to me, than any other creature in this world: but Religion is an additional tie of affection, by which you are still more strongly united to me. When I reflect on our alliance by consanguinity; I consider you as children fashioned and formed within me, of whom death will very soon deprive me: but, by the light of faith I behold you as children stamped with the image of God himself, and destined to live with me forever in the regions of eternal happiness.

Without such ideas as these, so capable of raising and comforting the soul, a mother knows nothing superior to that sort of fondness, which the brute creature shews towards its young: affection, which is merely earthly, is nothing more than pure instinct. Whereas religion purifies parental love, and gives it a continuance which will never have an end.

Learn hence, my dear children, that your behaviour, unless you have heaven in your view, will be mean and unworthy. Earth

has not a point, on which an immortal being can rest: whatever it has to offer, must needs perish with it; and whatsoever perisheth, is as nothing.

When a soldier is thoroughly persuaded of this truth, he is a thousand times a better officer for it. He does not wait to be seen by men, in order to acquit himself with valour: he knows that he is seen of GOD, and that is sufficient for him. A true Christian is never faint-hearted, when he is doing his duty: he is persuaded that religion has placed him in his post, that she requires him to hazard his life for his King and Country, and he is prepared to obey her commands.

All my comfort, amid the ravages which infidelity is making, is, that you are of such rank as only to associate with persons of quality. Liberal minds seldom protest openly against religion: it is chiefly in the company of low persons, or those who have had no proper education, that impious conversation prevails.

Good GOD! what pleasure can a Christian find, in ridiculing the sacred truths of Christianity? What credit can he gain in reviling the religion of his fathers; in which he lives,

and in which he expects to die? We admire those letters, in which the Jew, the Turk, the Persian, speak of the worship of their respective Deities, with transport and enthusiastic reverence. And do *we* ridicule a work, on the authority of which the Christian's faith stands supported? What an inconsistency! what monstrous absurdity!

O! my dear children: if you could look into my soul, you would see how earnestly I desire that you should render unto GOD the things which are GOD's; that you should observe his law, respect his ministers, and not tamely suffer wicked raillery to be levelled against any thing which relates to divine worship. The least pleasantry, upon so sacred a subject, is almost always blasphemy.

Whenever you approach as near to the end of your life, as I am at this time, you will, I hope, have as lively a sense of that awful Deity, whom we are too apt to forget in the days of health, and in the vigour of life: his justice on one side, and his mercy on the other, will then engage all your thoughts, and all your admiration.

Whenever you can truly say, you fear nothing but GOD; you will consider the ap-

proach of death, only as an entrance on a state of happiness. A life full of crimes, and even a life that has been unprofitably spent, is a dreadful object to the eyes of a Christian, at the point of death. But observe, that the piety, which I am at present recommending to you, is only such as is manly, rational and solid;-founded on the authority of the Gospel, and recommended and enforced by the Christian church, in every age, and nation, in which Christianity is known. Superstition never yet made a good Christian. It only exposes religion to contempt, to make it consist in those frivolous ceremonies, which true piety disclaims.

O! if I had but the knowledge of those great and holy men, whose names we justly venerate; I would paint true religion to my children in colours the most lively, and represent it in terms the most endearing that can be conceived. I would shew them, that the beauteous firmament itself is but a faint image of the spiritual purity of religion; and that the soul which it enlightens, is far superior to the material heavens. O thou Spirit of truth! descend into the hearts of my children; convincing them so thoroughly of the

vanity of the world, that they may be attac
ed to Thee alone! I would rather wish th
should expire in my presence, than that th
should ever renounce their religion. It
their happiness to be born within its influenc
their ancestors were firm believers of t
truths of Christianity; and with my late
breath I pray, that above all other riches, th
may possess the inestimable treasures of su
stantial piety.

Excuse, my dear children, the irregulari
of this conference: my language is the effi
sion of a heart which utters its sentiments
a desultory manner. The desire I have
saying a thousand things at the same tim
creates a confusion of ideas; and this desi
terminates only in weak endeavours.

Indeed I have the most dreadful conflic
within myself: my body, though little bett
than an empty shadow, swallows up my so
and abaseth it to the earth; it gives me
other proof of its existence than my suffe
ings; the pains I feel, have an influence
every thought and expression. But I con
fort myself by reflecting, that this state is on
a passage to a better; and that the hour is
hand, when my gracious GOD will receive m

into the arms of his mercy. How dear to is that religion, which presents such ha ness to my view! What an enemy to own peace is the man, who would disc his best friend, his supreme consolatior this world!

What I have said to you on this impor topic, deserves to be made the subject of y most serious reflections; as well because the language of truth itself, as because i the exhortation of a dying parent. H meanly would you think of me, if I wer regardless of your *first* concern, as, in tl my last moments, to exhort you to be car only to secure the blessings of the pre life! The sight of my palid countena which is the very image of death, would sl you, that I should be equally weak and w ed in wishing to deceive you; and that world, with all its charms, is in reality notl more than a dream which deceives us, which passes away with incredible rapidi

A little reflection will convince you there is nothing but God and his religion, continuance whereof we can ensure; and every thing has an end, except the domir of virtue. Good Heavens! in what a sit

tion should I find myself, if I had only reckoned upon this mortal life; if all my happiness had centered within the circle of a few years! I should see nothing before me but annihilation, or something far more terrible. But, by the help of religion, my mind is raised up to GOD, and from the mansions of the grave I perceive a light arising, diffused by the mercy of that GOD, whose goodness is the source of my delight. This is my consolation, and that of every Christian: this also, my dear children, will be your comfort, if you faithfully observe the divine commandments.

You are by no means left at liberty to follow the dictates of your own passions, or to walk in the paths of unbelief. The education which you have received, the advice of your father just before his death, and my admonitions under the same circumstances, make you accountable for your conduct to your own country, and to all mankind. They will listen to you, they will watch you; and if your behaviour be unsuitable to the advantages with which you have been distinguished, you will be universally despised.

Thus it is that the world itself can take its

revenge of you; and indifferent as it may ap pear about religion, it will always be ready t take its part against you. Every one will b ready to cry out, how is it possible that per sons, so virtuously educated, should giv themselves up to such licentiousness; surel their hearts must be more than ordinaril corrupt.

But you will not, I hope, be restrained altc gether by this consideration; an earnest de sire to please God, and not to degenerate fror the honour of your ancestors, will, I trus engage you to persevere in the practice c your duty.

You have too just a sense of this to forg him who hath made you; or to neglect to o fer him, every morning and evening of you lives, the tribute of adoration and love; or t forsake the assemblies of those holy person who never fail to implore the assistance c heaven. It is only by debasing ourselves t a level with the brute creation, that we lo the idea of GOD. How can we forget Hi in whom we live, and by whom we have ou being? How can we fail to delight in th service of Him, who is the author and foun tain of all our honour and happiness? Ho

richly do they deserve the name of fools, who are regardless of the worship of GOD, and who affect to despise the ordinances of religion?

I am not afraid that you will be prejudiced against the true religion, by being told, that it abounds with incomprehensible mysteries: common sense will inform any one, that an infinite Being is a fathomless abyss; and that his nature is unsearchable. But I fear lest your passions should seduce you; they only can persuade you to believe that Christianity is not the work of GOD.

But let us draw the veil over an event, the very possibility of which is so dreadful: I had much rather persuade myself that, like your forefathers, you will live in the fear of GOD; and that, like them, you will die in an humble hope of being admitted into his blessed presence. If you waited only for my death, before you declared in favour of infidelity; alas! how little would you gain by it! Will not your heart be equally open to that GOD who seeth you now, when I am removed out of your sight? It is He, and not such a poor worm of the earth as I am, that

you ought to regard; that Being who is merciful to the good, but terrible to the ungodly.

O! how often hath the idea of his justice affrighted me! Even at this time, when I have a deep sense of his mercy impressed upon my mind; the thoughts of my dissolution, and circumstances which will attend it, make me afraid: the profusion of tears which my friends will shed, the solemn procession, the profound respect of my attendants, all serve to fill my weakened mind with awful apprehensions. One while I see nothing but the Majesty of the living GOD, and the insignificance of the creature, which he is about to sacrifice: at another time, with most dutiful submission I await the blow, which shall reduce me to my original dust, as a tribute due to his sovereign Majesty.

How wonderful will be the instantaneous change in our ideas! how far beyond the power of reason to comprehend! It stands astonished at the view of that immensity, into which I am about to enter! Yet a moment ——and GOD alone will either fill me with his glory, or overwhelm me with the terrors of his justice. What an alteration! All the

kings in the universe must experience the same fate.

It is not the terror of the grave, nor the horrible corruption which this body of mine is about to experience, nor that eternal oblivion to which I shall be consigned, which affrights me: but that new world, which I see only as through a glass darkly, and of which we only know in part, even when we are dying; that strange land to which all generations are destined to go, and from which no one is permitted to return.

This, my dear children, is the object which ought to engage your principal attention, and not altogether the renown which you may acquire in arms, or the rank to which you may be advanced at court.

As for your mother, while you are all of you deeply engaged in the tumult of worldly affairs, she, perhaps———but why, gracious SAVIOUR! should I disquiet myself with uncertainty? I cannot be ignorant that thy mercies are infinite; and that heaven is open for the admission of all who sincerely love and trust in Thee.

O! my children, the dearest objects of my affection! it is to GOD himself that I recom-

mend you: His Providence will guar
youth: it extends itself even to the m
considerable part of the creation. Hi
towards you will supply the loss of you
tions, who are now no more. No one
so much your father as he is: you wi
him to be such, while you live; you w
experience his mercy in the hour of
He is every where present; and on all
sions: yet will he be no longer yours, l
ject you for ever, if you forsake him.

CONFERENCE XIX.

ON THE VANITY OF THE WORL

FOR three weeks our exemplary n
had found herself somewhat better:
end of which her appetite failed her,
once; this, together with her loss of slee
duced her to the lowest state of weakne
aginable. Yet she wished to have one
opportunity of conversing with her chil
though the instructions which she had al

given them were so full, as to leave hardly any thing, that was necessary, unsaid.

The extreme weakness of my present state, says she, affords me an occasion of speaking to you on the vanity of all things in this world. —Look at me with attention, see how dim my eyes appear; how emaciated my person, and what possession death has already taken of me! This was the woman, that appeared not long ago with such eclat; that was celebrated for her amiable qualities, as well as for her external accomplishments. Here are only remains of what she was; a mere shadow—a nothing.

This situation has rendered me much more of a philosopher than all the books that were ever written on the subject, could have done. Alas! whilst I suffer, and even am dying by degrees, I have seen all those objects gradually lose their value, which my imagination raised far above their real worth. Pleasures now appear to me only as mere illusions, and honours as an empty vapour. Truth seems every day to take me by the hand, and shew me the vanity of this world, and the emptiness of every thing which it possesseth.

The same effect is produced in me, which

the autumn every year exhibits to our view: just as we then see the beauties of nature gradually disappear, I have seen the grandeur of this world diminished; its most valuable possessions debased, and all its ornaments stript off, as leaves from the trees by the winter's blast.

False appearances dazzle our eyes, while we enjoy perfect health; every thing then bewitches us; every thing seduces us; every thing appears to us eternal in its duration. Scarcely hath a fit of sickness seized us, but truth dispels the charm, and recals us to ourselves; leaving us to behold nothing but a veil of darkness, drawn over all that heretofore excited our admiration.

In proportion as I draw nearer to my grave, the horizon grows darker; and those entertainments, which once enchanted me, those balls which charmed me, those assemblies which intoxicated my mind and my senses, seem only phantoms, of which I have been the dupe, which on a moment's reflection, disappear.

It is wonderful to observe what an indifference for life a tedious illness gives us: how it detaches us from those false pleasures, which

have no other reality in them, than the remorse and weariness which they occasion. Providence almost always interposes itself to undeceive us; and to convince us, that in Him alone all our admiration, and all our researches ought to center.

Could you have thought, my dear children, that I should, in the space of a few months, become an object so different from myself; an emblem of all human miseries, and even a frightful spectre! Perhaps, indeed, you have not courage enough to behold me: at least look beyond those shadows of death which surround me.—Dwell not on those melancholy objects, which offend the sight; but amid those sad ruins which my body has undergone, separate that heart which is still intire, and loves you with inexpressible tenderness; that alone has not yet felt the ravages of death. But alas! like the wretched skeleton that surrounds it, that also must soon return to the dust, from which it was originally formed.

It will only be my immortal spirit, of which we are regardless amid the bustle of the world, that will constitute the whole of my existence, until the time, when my body shall be re-animated. Alas! the only part of me, which

hath any stability or duration, is that which I so long suffered to be utterly forgotten: and all those flattering objects, which heretofore soothed my vanity, are now departed as a dream.

What folly is it, my children, to be so strongly attached to objects of such a transitory nature! to put one's confidence in things, which have only the appearance of good. Alas! if all the most captivating scenes in the world could be now exhibited to my view; had I now the disposal of crowns and treasures, what advantage could I receive from them? Could they one moment arrest the hand of death? Could they give the smallest degree of strength to my body, or beauty to my person? And, even if they were capable of producing such wonders, would they be of any continuance? Every thing here below, not excepting even life itself, is but a dream.—How many great men have you seen pass away! Though their glory appeared immortal, we now scarcely remember that they ever existed. Death hath destroyed not only their bodies, but their very name, and their remembrance.

O! how low doth human greatness sink;

when the curtain is drawn up, and we see only the Majesty of GOD! It is nothing more than an imperceptible point, lost in the abyss of immensity.

I have lived in the society of persons, among whom my fortune, rank, and dignity attracted many admirers; when the vivacity of pleasure intoxicated my heart, and charmed my senses: but all that glory is departed as a shadow, and the societies themselves are sunk into nothing. A few years have effected this strange revolution: time is a pitiless destroyer, which is daily consuming every thing that is mortal, and by degrees annihilates itself.

O heavens! what a vacancy appears before my eyes; when I review the number of persons within the circle of my own acquaintance, who are now no more: enough almost to form a world. You will very soon add me to the number: my slender voice, my emaciated figure, my exhausted frame, all unitedly declare, that I have nothing to expect within the compass of the universe, but five or six feet of earth.

The same lot awaits you all, at some little distance of time. Your youth will pass away

like a rose; and for aught we know, you are this moment on the brink of destruction. The grave receives as many young as old: every creature is tributary to death: he is an unrelenting creditor, who suffers no one to be at rest.

How strangely should I have been deceived, if I had reckoned upon threescore or fourscore years. By the blast of the Almighty the bloom of my life is faded away; and I am brought to contemplate my death, in a state of extreme weakness: and ought I to complain of this state? I who like other human creatures, was born to die, and whose dissipation and folly have deserved a large portion of the cup of bitterness and sorrow.

It is only by the tenderness of my affection, that you can know me to be your mother. Sickness has so entirely effaced every line of my person, as to render me quite a stranger to my own family, and to all my attendants: they look shy upon me; they are afraid to come near me; and it is only their exceeding great affection for me, that gets the better of their unwillingness to approach me. I am very far from blaming them; for I have much ado even to remember myself.

It is only this perspective, that discovers truth to us; while we see nothing but the gaudy splendour of the world, we live in the midst of error and delusion. But as soon as we reflect upon our frailty, we turn towards ourselves, and towards heaven; we penetrate even into the reality of things, and do not suffer ourselves to be dazzled by appearances.

How thankful ought I to be, that death approaches me so gradually, as insensibly to reconcile me to it, and withdraw my attention from every seducing object. I pass my days in reflecting on the sources of my life, which are exhausted; in reading those books, which remind me of my latter end: for it is right that you should know, that I never spare myself on this subject. Every morning I take my looking-glass, to see to what state death reduces us; and often, very often I am reminded, that my coffin is just ready to receive me.

There it is, my dear children, that very soon your fond mother, without either sense or motion, and without any prospect of returning to this world again, will be destined to moulder in the bosom of corruption. O! fearful thought!—But I will spare your ten-

derness on a subject too affecting for you, as well as for myself. You are not ignorant, (indeed who is?) that this dismal end is the lot of all men; and that in spite of the pleasures which delude them, in spite of the false glory which dazzles them, they must fall into the depths of horror and oblivion.

Dreadful as the darkness of the tomb may appear, it has enlightened me more than the brightness of the sun: this only shews me perishable objects; that discovers to me the excellence of my spiritual part, and the majesty of my GOD, which before were in a manner concealed from me. By the help of the light which that imparts to me, I have gone through the whole world, and have discovered much vanity and misery; I have seen nothing more effectually instructive than death and dying persons, burials and epitaphs.

See all that remains to me of earthly greatness: In short, inscription serves to inform others, that we once lived, and are now no more; and even this is effaced by length of time. The marble itself decays; and the eternity of the supreme Being triumphs over the nothingness of man.

I have said enough, I hope my dear chil-

dren, to convince you that I do not wish for inscriptions, or magnificent titles on my tomb: I am nothing more than dust, and to the same element am I returning, from which I was formed. And can dry bones reduced to dust, and mouldering in corruption, deserve a panegyric? O where shall we set bounds to our vanity, if it do not sink into nothing at the very sight of a grave?

I think you must have opportunities enough of discovering, that I am too thoroughly sensible of the vanity of the world, to wish to survive myself, in wretched praises inscribed on my monument: rather let me atone for my errors and my follies by an eternal oblivion. Heaven would arm itself against me, if I thought of decorating a miserable sepulchre; it would only serve to perpetuate my pride beyond the limits of this present life, if I should attempt by improper ornaments to alter the very nature of that which in itself is nothing but misery and corruption.

All that I require of you my beloved friends, is to come sometimes to the place of my interment; not merely to shed a few tears over my cold and senseless ashes, but to recall to your minds the instructions which I have

given you. That awful solemnity, that mournful silence, which prevail in the neighbourhood of sepulchres, will give you leisure and inclination to meditate seriously on all that I have said to you. The representation of death is the best school, wherein we can learn to live as we ought: to raise the soul from earthly things, and to fix it upon GOD.

Promise me that you will sometimes visit that instructive spot; I invite you thither. And if you love me well enough to have your minds properly stored with the precepts which I have delivered to you, you will consider me as actually present with you there: I shall have no other method of appearing to you, or conversing with you.

Alas! my poor children, what a melancholy task am I imposing on you! If the world knew it, it would be silly enough to treat it with contempt: but my affection prompts me to communicate to you this useful and important secret.

Leave the world to act for itself; and never listen to it in any matter, which concerns your duty. It is fond of nothing, which does not contribute to its amusement; and esteems nothing, but what flatters its taste for vanity and pleasure.

What an impassable gulph is about to interpose itself betwixt the world and me! Yet a little while, and I shall neither know what scenes of entertainment are exhibited; nor what revolutions take place in it: yet a very little while, and all ideas of the succession of months and years will be utterly lost. But that which gives me some concern is, that this spot of earth on which you remain, will be lost in that immensity which awaits me; so that I shall be totally unacquainted with your conduct or your destination.—What a change must be wrought in my existence. What a revolution in my sentiments. Is it possible to conceive that an instant should produce such astonishing effects? At present I cannot properly be said to belong either to this world or the other: I am like a traveller divided between two different ways; and death in the twinkling of an eye, will put an end to my uncertainty. One while I feel myself reluctant; at another time I desire the stroke: strange alternative! on one side is the prospect of supreme felicity; on the other the pain of being separated from that which is most dear to me.

I doubt not, my children, but my love for

you will be considered as romantic; and indeed I believe it rises to an uncommon height. But this at last I am sure of, that I am not mistaken in the advice which I have given you: it is the language of truth; it is the voice of a dying friend, that you have heard.

We are continually running with eagerness to a new tragedy: we are filled with the sad scenes which it presents; and we find a degree of pleasure, even in the tears which it excites.—Here is a scene yet more affecting: we have no recourse to fiction; here the chief character in this tragedy is a mother really expiring; the sentence is pronounced, and is on the very point of being executed.

I have for some days felt myself more weak than usual, and find that my life is now making its escape from this tottering frame; nothing indeed supports me but my tenderness for you: hitherto it has detained my fugitive spirit, but at length it will be forced to yield.

Come hither, that I may embrace you: if you have courage to join your lips to an expiring body, and to bathe in a flood of tears. Alas! I have nothing but tears to give you; the weakness of my body, and the strength which yet remains, destroy my powers of utterance.

How sad the separation! What a mournful farewell! the tenderness of my affection reminds me of the hour in which I brought you into the world: but there is this sad difference; that I this day behold you, to see you no more. Support me, gracious Father, in this dreadful trial: suffer me not to sink under the burden of maternal tenderness. I know that I ought to forget every thing for thy sake: and yet my heart never ceases to think of my children. Dear as they are to me, efface them for ever from my memory, if this love either be, or will be imputed to me as a fault.

But what am I saying? Good GOD! thou knowest, that I only love them for thy sake; and that I wish them no other happiness, than that which arises from obedience to thy law. My only reason for wishing to live among them a few years, had it been thy gracious will, is to establish in them the love of that which is good: this it is, which makes my separation from my children a thousand times more painful, than the approaching separation of my soul from my body. See! there they are! Yet do I see and hear them! Yet are they——

But what pain and distraction is this, which seizes me! The pleasure I now have in them is but a momentary gratification; yet a little while and there will not be a person on earth, who will love them with a thousandth part of the tenderness with which their mother loves them. O! how I am lost in the depth of such reflections!

CONFERENCE XX.

ON RELATIVE DUTY.

OUR excellent mother, having received a visit from her brother-in-law, and having conversed with him for half an hour, desired he would permit her to introduce her children to him: when, in the language of the tenderest affection, she thus addressed them:

"This, my dear children, is the person, whom henceforth you are to consider as your parent: as you are connected with him by the ties of consanguinity, I beseech you to attach yourselves to him by the obligations of

inviolable friendship.—The love you have for me, which is about to expire, when I shall no longer exist in the world, ought to be transferred to your uncle: to his favour I recommend you; no one can give you better advice than he can."

Then turning herself towards her brother, she addressed him thus: "O my dear brother, you who continually remind me of my excellent husband, and in whom I have always found such sentiments as one so nearly related to him may easily be supposed to entertain, have pity on these children. Pity their tender age; pity their orphan state, when I shall be taken from them—my days are ended; my life is but a blast; and nothing remains to me, but the regret of having wretchedly mispent it.

O that I could now be assured by you that my wishes would be accomplished: what would become of these unhappy creatures in the midst of a most dangerous world, if they were not blest with your friendship. In them, my dear brother, recollect both their father, whom you affectionately loved, and their mother, who has no power of utterance beyond sighs and tears.

My heart is inexpressibly affected at this

dreadful separation, even as it were from myself: as I before observed to you, it is more terrible to me than the horrors of the grave.

Forgive me, gracious Lord! Thou knowest, that even in my dreams, even in the most solemn acts of devotion, even in the prayers addressed to thy heavenly Majesty, the remembrance of my family continually interposed itself, to distract my mind. In vain have I wished to have my whole attention fixed upon Thee; in vain have I endeavoured to become wholly absorbed by the contemplation of Thine infinite perfections. My thoughts perpetually recur to those objects of my love, which Thou hast given me, and art now about to separate from me.

Alas! my dear children, I feel that I have much less fortitude than I appear to have: one moment's reflection on your sad condition, one single thought on the subject of our separation, overwhelms my soul with the deepest sorrow.—O Heaven! my mind hath too much sensibility at present: ere long, no visible object will affect it. These, my dear children, are the last struggles of my affection: my heart at this moment seems to collect every thing that is most tender and affec-

tionate, in order to bid you an everlasting farewell."

At these words she melted into tears, when her brother-in-law answered:

"No, my sister, GOD will not be offended with that tenderness, for which you blame yourself: He is goodness itself; and the holy scriptures dwell particularly on the subject of his love. If your affection for your children were merely carnal and earthly, the case were different; but your love for them is that of a Christian parent, who is chiefly solicitous for their eternal salvation.

"Make yourself as easy as possible on their account; you entrust them to my care, and I will not be regardless of their welfare. I shall consider them as my own children; in me they shall at once experience the authority of a father and the affection of a mother; and I verily believe we shall none of us forget the confidence you repose in us. Comfort yourself, therefore, with reflecting that you leave us only preparing ourselves to follow you; since this life, however long it may be accounted, is in reality no more than a state of momentary existence."

CONFERENCE XXI.

ON KINDNESS TO DOMESTICS.

THOUGH our exemplary mother appeared to have exhausted her whole power of utterance in these admonitions to her children; yet one subject remained, arising from the care she took to recommend to their kindness her family and dependants.

When they were all together, she said to her sons, in a voice that could with difficulty be heard: "I charge you to be kind to these my domestics, who have always been strongly attached to me. Some of them served your father, and others have given me every proof of the most dutiful regard. I have not forgotten them in my will; but that is not sufficient; they have a demand on you for kindness, as friends in distress; for it is in this point of view, that I would have you consider them: they are sprung from the same origin, and are destined to the same end with yourselves.

O how unreasonable is that pride, which

the world affects; and which makes us look down with contempt on persons in every essential respect like ourselves!

Never forget, that we dishonour and debase human nature, whenever we treat any person with disdain, merely because his external appearance is meaner than our own. Your names, when you were baptised, were entered in the same register with those of the poorest; and the dust, to which you will one day be reduced, may assure you that the same destiny of mortality awaits us all.

Am I not going to be mixed with the lowest and meanest of my fellow creatures? Shall I not be reduced to a level with the humblest slave? Thus doth death cast down the high looks of the proud.

You will indeed act agreeably to my wishes, when you treat your domestics with kindness; when you watch over their morals, and take care of their health. GOD knows that even to the time, when pride and a love of the world fed my vanity, I was never altogether unmindful of them; nor ever spoke to them in a haughty style: if I ever did, here they are, let them witness against me."

To these words her domestics could only

cluded, that the impression made by his instruction and uniform example, could never be effaced from the memory of his children, yet his anxiety for their orphan condition suggested to him this method of continuing to them those advantages.

The Editor, considering it a very important duty incumbent on parents, to attend strictly to the morals and improvement of their children, and supposing all good and affectionate parents desirous of doing this with propriety, has the confidence to recommend to them this little Treatise as being worthy of their notice; and which, from its superior merit, and the good reception which former editions of it have met with, he is led to believe will meet their most cordial approbation.

A

FATHER'S LEGACY.

INTRODUCTION.

My dear Girls,

You had the misfortune to be deprived of your mother at a time of life when you were insensible of your loss, and could receive little benefit, either from her instruction, or her example. Before this comes to your hands, you will likewise have lost your father.

I have had many melancholy reflections on the forlorn and helpless situation you must be left in, if it should please God to remove me from you before you arrive at that period of life when you will be able to think and act for yourselves.—I know mankind too well—I know their falsehood, their dissipation, their coldness to all the duties of friendship and humanity—I know the little attention paid to helpless infancy. You will meet with few friends disinterested enough to do you good

offices, when you are incapable of making them any return by contributing to their interest or their pleasure, or even to the gratification of their vanity.

I have been supported under the gloom naturally arising from these reflections, by a reliance on the goodness of that Providence which has hitherto preserved you, and given me the most pleasing prospect of the goodness of your dispositions; and by the secret hope that your mother's virtues will entail a blessing on her children.

The anxiety I have for your happiness has made me resolve to throw together my sentiments relating to your future conduct in life. If I live for some years, you will receive them with much greater advantage, suited to your different geniuses and dispositions. If I die sooner, you must receive them in this very imperfect manner—the last proof of my affection.

You will all remember your father's fondness, when perhaps every other circumstance relating to him is forgotten. This remembrance, I hope, will induce you to give a serious attention to the advices I am now going to leave with you. I can request this atten-

tion with the greater confidence, as my sentiments on the most interesting points that regard life and manners, were entirely correspondent to your mother's, whose judgment and taste I trusted much more than my own.

You must expect that the advices which I shall give you will be very imperfect, as there are many nameless delicacies in female manners, of which none but a woman can judge. You will have the advantage by attending to what I am going to leave with you; you will hear, at least for once in your lives, the genuine sentiments of a man, who has no interest in flattering or deceiving you. I shall throw my reflections together without any studied order, and shall only, to avoid confusion, range them under a few general heads.

You will see, in a little treatise of mine just published, in what an honourable point of view I have considered your sex; not as domestic drudges, or the slaves of our pleasures, but as our companions and equals; as designed to soften our hearts and polish our manners, and as Thomson finely says,

> "To rise the virtues, animate the bliss,
> "And sweeten all the toils of human life."

I shall not repeat what I have there said on

this subject, and shall only observe, that from the view I have given of your natural character, and place in society, there arises a certain propriety of conduct peculiar to your sex. It is this peculiar propriety of female manners, of which I intend to give you my sentiments, without touching on those general rules of conduct, by which men and women are equally bound.

While I explain to you that system of conduct which I think will tend most to your honour and happiness, I shall, at the same time, endeavour to point out those virtues and accomplishments which render you most respectable and most amiable in the eyes of my own sex.

RELIGION.

THOUGH the duties of religion, strictly speaking, are equally binding on both sexes, yet certain differences in their natural character and education, render some vices in your sex particularly odious. The natural hardness of our hearts, and strength of our passions, inflamed by the uncontrolled licence we are too often indulged with in our youth, are apt to render our manners more dissolute, and make us less susceptible of the finer feelings of the heart.—Your superior delicacy, your modesty, and the usual severity of your education, preserve you in a great measure, from any temptation to those vices to which we are most subject. The natural softness and sensibility of your dispositions particularly fits you for the practice of those duties where the heart is chiefly concerned. And this, along with the natural warmth of your imagination, renders you particularly susceptible of the feelings of devotion.

There are many circumstances in your situation, that peculiarly require the supports of religion to enable you to act in them with

spirit and propriety. Your whole life is often a life of suffering—you cannot plunge into business, or dissipate yourselves in pleasure and riot, as men too often do, when under the pressure of misfortunes—you must bear your sorrows in silence, unknown and unpitied—you must often put on a face of serenity and cheerfulness, when your hearts are torn with anguish, or sinking in despair. Then your only resource is in the consolations of religion. It is chiefly owing to these, that you bear domestic misfortunes better than we do.

But you are sometimes in very different circumstances, that equally require the restraints of religion. The natural vivacity, and perhaps the natural vanity of your sex, is very apt to lead you into a dissipated state of life, that deceives you, under the appearance of innocent pleasure; but which in reality wastes your spirits, impairs your health, weakens all the superior faculties of your minds, and often sullies your reputation. Religion, by checking this dissipation, and rage for pleasure, enables you to draw more happiness, even from those very sources of amusement, which, when too frequently applied to, are often productive of satiety and disgust.

Religion is rather a matter of sentiment han reasoning. The important and interest- ng articles of faith are sufficiently plain. Fix 'our attention on these, and do not meddle vith controversy. If you get into that, you lunge into a chaos, from which you will ne- 'er be able to extricate yourselves. It spoils he temper, and, I suspect, has no good effect n the heart.

Avoid all books, and all conversation, that end to shake your faith on those great points f religion which should serve to regulate 'our conduct, and on which your hopes of uture and eternal happiness depend.

Never indulge yourselves in ridicule on re- igious subjects; nor give countenance to it n others, by seeming diverted with what they ay. This, to people of good breeding, will e a sufficient check.

I wish you to go no further than the Scrip- ures for your religious opinions. Embrace hose you find clearly revealed. Never per- lex yourselves about such as you do not un- lerstand; but treat them with silent and be- oming reverence. I would advise you to ead only such religious books as are address- d to the heart, such as inspire pious and de-

vout affections, such as are proper to direct you in your conduct, and not such as tend to entangle you in the endless maze of opinions and systems.

Be punctual in the stated performance of your private devotions, morning and evening. If you have any sensibility or imagination, this will establish such an intercourse between you and the Supreme Being, as will be of infinite consequence to you in life. It will communicate an habitual cheerfulness to your tempers, give a firmness and steadiness to your virtue, and enable you to go through all the vicissitudes of human life with propriety and dignity.

I wish you to be regular in your attendance on public worship, and in receiving the communion. Allow nothing to interrupt your public or private devotions, except the performance of some active duty in life, to which they should always give place. In your behaviour at public worship, observe an exemplary attention and gravity.

That extreme strictness which I recommend to you in these duties, will be considered by many of your acquaintance as a superstitious attachment to forms; but in the ad-

vices I give you on this and other subjects, I have an eye to the spirit and manners of the age. There is a levity and dissipation in the present manners, a coldness and listlessness in whatever relates to religion, which cannot fail to infect you, unless you purposely cultivate in your minds a contrary bias, and make the devotional taste habitual.

Avoid all grimace and ostentation in your religious duties. They are the usual cloaks of hypocrisy; at least they shew a weak and vain mind.

Do not make religion a subject of common conversation in mixed companies. When it is introduced, rather seem to decline it. At the same time, never suffer any person to insult you by any foolish ribaldry on your religious opinions, but shew the same resentment you would naturally do in being offered any other personal insult. But the surest way to avoid this, is by a modest reserve on the subject, and by using no freedom with others about their religious sentiments.

Cultivate an enlarged charity for all mankind, however they may differ from you in their religious opinions. That difference may probably arise from causes in which you had

no share, and from which you can derive no merit.

Shew your regard to religion, by a distinguishing respect to all its ministers, of whatever persuasion, who do not by their lives dishonour their profession; but never allow them the direction of your consciences, lest they taint you with the narrow spirit of their party.

The best effect of your religion, will be a diffusive humanity to all in distress. Set apart a certain proportion of your income as sacred to charitable purposes. But in this, as well as in the practice of every other duty, carefully avoid ostentation. Vanity is always defeating her own purposes. Fame is one of the natural rewards of virtue. Do not pursue her, and she will follow you.

Do not confine your charity to giving money. You may have many opportunities of shewing a tender and compassionate spirit where your money is not wanted. There is a false and unnatural refinement in sensibility, which makes some people shun the sight of every object in distress. Never indulge this, especially where your friends or acquaintances are concerned. Let the days of their mis-

fortunes, when the world forgets or avoids them, be the season for you to exercise your humanity and friendship. The sight of human misery softens the heart, and makes it better; it checks the pride of health and prosperity, and the distress it occasions is amply compensated by the consciousness of doing your duty, and by the secret endearment which nature has annexed to all our sympathetic sorrows.

Women are greatly deceived, when they think they recommend themselves to our sex by their indifference about religion. Even those men who are themselves unbelievers, dislike infidelity in you. Every man who knows human nature, connects a religious taste in your sex with softness and sensibility of heart; at least we always consider the want of it as a proof of that hard and masculine spirit, which of all your faults we dislike the most. Besides, men consider your religion as one of their principal securities for that female virtue in which they are most interested. If a gentleman pretend an attachment to any of you, and endeavour to shake your religious principles, be assured he is either a fool, or has designs on you, which he dares not openly avow.

You will probably wonder at my having educated you in a Church different from my own. The reason was plainly this: I looked on the differences between our Churches to be of no real importance, and that a preference of one to the other was a mere matter of taste. Your mother was educated in the Church of England, and had an attachment to it, and I had a prejudice in favour of every thing she liked. It never was her desire that you should be baptised by a Clergyman of the Church of England, or be educated in that Church. On the contrary, the delicacy of her regard to the smallest circumstance that could affect me in the eye of the world, made her anxiously insist it might be otherwise; but I could not yield to her in that kind of generosity. When I lost her, I became still more determined to educate you in that Church, as I feel a secret pleasure in doing every thing that appears to me to express my affection and veneration for her memory. I draw but a very faint and imperfect picture of what your mother was, while I endeavour to point out what you should be.*

* The reader will remember, that such observations as respect equally both the sexes, are all along as much as *possible* avoided.

CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR.

ONE of the chief beauties in a female character, is that modest reserve, that retiring delicacy, which avoids the public eye, and is disconcerted even at the gaze of admiration. I do not wish you to be insensible to applause. If you were, you must become, if not worse, at least less amiable women. But you may be dazzled by that admiration, which yet rejoices your hearts.

When a girl ceases to blush, she has lost the most powerful charm of beauty. That extreme sensibility which it indicates, may be a weakness and incumbrance in our sex, as I have too often felt; but in yours it is peculiarly engaging.—Pedants, who think themselves philosophers, ask why a woman should blush when she is conscious of no crime? It is a sufficient answer, that Nature has made you to blush when you are guilty of no fault, and has forced us to love you because you do so. Blushing is so far from being necessarily an attendant on guilt, that it is the usual companion of innocence.

This modesty, which I think so essential in your sex, will naturally dispose you to be rather silent in company, especially in a large one.—People of sense and discernment will never mistake such silence for dulness. One may take a share in conversation without uttering a syllable. The expression in the countenance shews it; and this never escapes an observing eye.

I should be glad that you had an easy dignity in your behaviour at public places, but not that confident ease, that unabashed countenance which seems to set the company at defiance. If, while a gentleman is speaking to you, one of superior rank addresses you, do not let your eager attention and visible preference betray the flutter of your heart. Let your pride on this occasion preserve you from that meanness into which your vanity would sink you. Consider that you expose yourselves to the ridicule of the company, and affront one gentleman, only to swell the triumph of another, who perhaps thinks he does you honour in speaking to you.

Converse with men, even of the first rank, with that dignified modesty which may prevent the approach of the most distant familiar-

ity, and consequently prevent them from feeling themselves your superiors.

Wit is the most dangerous talent you can possess. It must be guarded with great discretion and good nature, otherwise it will create you many enemies. Wit is perfectly consistent with softness and delicacy; yet they are seldom found united. Wit is so flattering to vanity, that they who possess it become intoxicated, and lose all self-command.

Humour is a different quality. It will make your company much solicited; but be cautious how you indulge it. It is often a great enemy to delicacy, and a still greater one to dignity of character. It may sometimes gain you applause, but will never procure you respect.

Be even cautious of displaying your good sense. It will be thought you assume a superiority over the rest of the company. But if you happen to have any learning, keep it a profound secret, especially from the men, who generally look with a jealous and malignant eye on a woman of great parts, and a cultivated understanding.

A man of real genius and candour is far superior to this meanness. But such an one

will seldom fall in your way; and if by a dent he should, do not be anxious to shew full extent of your knowledge. If he h any opportunities of seeing you, he will s discover it himself; and if you have any vantages of person or manner, and keep y own secret, he will probably give you cr for a great deal more than you possess. T great art of pleasing in conversation cons in making the company pleased with th selves. You will more readily hear them yourselves into their good graces.

Beware of detraction, especially where y own sex are concerned. You are gener accused of being particularly addicted to vice, I think unjustly. Men are fully as g ty of it when their interests interfere. your interests more frequently clash, and your feelings are quicker than ours, your t tations to it are more frequent. For this r son be particularly tender of the reputatio your own sex, especially when they hap to rival you in our regard. We look on i as the strongest proof of dignity and t greatness of mind.

Shew a compassionate sympathy to unf tunate women, especially to those who

rendered so by the villainy of men. Indulge a secret pleasure, I may say pride, in being the friends and refuge of the unhappy, but without the vanity of shewing it.

Consider every species of indelicacy in conversation as shameful in itself, and as highly disgusting to us. All *double entendre* is of this sort. The dissoluteness of men's education allows them to be diverted with a kind of wit, which yet they have delicacy enough to be shocked at when it comes from your mouths, or even when you hear it without pain and contempt. Virgin purity is of that delicate nature, that it cannot bear certain things without contamination. It is always in your power to avoid these. No man, but a brute or a fool, will insult a woman with conversation which he sees gives her pain; nor will he dare to do it, if she resent the injury with a becoming spirit. There is a dignity in conscious virtue, which is able to awe the most shameless and abandoned of men.

You will be reproached perhaps with prudery. By prudery is usually meant an affectation of delicacy. Now I do not wish you to affect delicacy; I wish you to possess it.

At any rate, it is better to run the risk of being thought ridiculous than disgusting.

The men will complain of your reserve.—They will assure you that a franker behaviour would make you more amiable. But, trust me, they are not sincere when they tell you so. I acknowledge, that on some occasions, it might render you more agreeable as companions, but it would make you less amiable as women—an important distinction, which many of your sex are not aware of. After all, I wish you to have great ease and openness in your conversation. I only point out some considerations which ought to regulate your behaviour in that respect.

Have a sacred regard to truth. Lying is a mean and despicable vice. I have known some women of excellent parts, who were so much addicted to it, that they could not be trusted in the relation of any story, especially if it contained any thing of the marvellous, or if they themselves were the heroines of the tale. This weakness did not proceed from a bad heart, but was merely the effect of vanity, or an unbridled imagination. I do not mean to censure that lively embellishment of

a humourous story, which is only intended to promote innocent mirth.

There is a certain gentleness of spirit and manners extremely engaging in your sex; not that indiscriminate attention, that unmeaning simper which smiles on all alike. This arises either from an affectation of softness, or from perfect insipidity.

There is a species of refinement in luxury, just beginning to prevail among the gentlemen of this country, to which our ladies are yet as great strangers as any women upon earth; I hope, for the honour of the sex, they may ever continue so—I mean the luxury of eating. It is a despicable, selfish vice in men, but in your sex it is beyond expression indelicate and disgusting.

Every one who remembers a few years back, is sensible of a very striking change in the attention and respect formerly paid by the gentlemen to the ladies. Their drawing-rooms are deserted; and after dinner and supper the gentlemen are impatient till they retire. How they came to lose this respect, which nature and politeness so well entitle them to, I shall not here particularly inquire. The revolutions of manners in any country

depend on causes very various and complicated. I shall only observe, that the behaviour of the ladies in the last age was very reserved and stately. It would now be reckoned ridiculously stiff and formal. Whatever it was, it had certainly the effect of making them more respected.

A fine woman, like other fine things in nature, has her proper point of view, from which she may be seen to most advantage. To fix this point requires great judgment, and an intimate knowledge of the human heart. By the present mode of female manners, the ladies seem to expect that they shall regain their ascendency over us, by the fullest display of their personal charms, by being always in our eye at public places, by conversing with us with the same unreserved freedom as we do with one another; in short, by resembling us as nearly as they possibly can: but a little time and experience will shew the folly of this expectation and conduct.

The power of a fine woman over the hearts of men, of men of the finest parts, is even beyond what she conceives. They are sensible of the pleasing illusion, but they cannot, nor do they wish to dissolve it. But if she be de-

termined to dispel the charm, it certainly is in her power: she may soon reduce the angel to a very ordinary girl.

There is a native dignity in ingenuous modesty to be expected in your sex, which is your natural protection from the familiarities of the men, and which you should feel previous to the reflection, that it is your interest to keep yourselves sacred from all personal freedoms. The many nameless charms and endearments of beauty should be reserved to bless the arms of the happy man to whom you give your heart; but who, if he have the least delicacy, will despise them, if he know that they have been prostituted to fifty men before him. The sentiment that a woman may allow all innocent freedoms, provided her virtue is secure, is both grossly indelicate and dangerous, and has proved fatal to many of your sex.

Let me now recommend to your attention that elegance, which is not so much a quality itself, as the high polish of every other. It is what diffuses an ineffable grace over every look, every motion, every sentence you utter. It gives that charm to beauty, without which it generally fails to please. It is partly a per-

sonal quality, in which respect it is the gift of Nature; but I speak of it principally as a quality of the mind. In a word, it is the perfection of taste in life and manners—every virtue and every excellency, in their most graceful and amiable forms.

You may perhaps think that I want to throw every spark of Nature out of your composition, and to make you entirely artificial. Far from it. I wish you to possess the most perfect simplicity of heart and manners. I think you may possess dignity without pride, affability without meanness, and simple elegance without affectation. Milton had my idea when he says of Eve—

> Grace was in all her steps, Heaven in her eye,
> In every gesture dignity and love.

AMUSEMENTS.

Every period of life has amusements which are natural and proper to it. You may indulge the variety of your taste in these, while you keep within the bounds of that propriety which is suitable to your sex.

Some amusements are conducive to health, as various kinds of exercise; some are connected with qualities really useful, as different kinds of women's work, and all the domestic concerns of a family; some are elegant accomplishments, as dress, dancing, music, and drawing. Such books as improve your understanding, enlarge your knowledge, and cultivate your taste, may be considered in a higher point of view than mere amusements.

There are a variety of others, which are neither useful nor ornamental, such as play of different kinds.

I would particularly recommend to you those exercises that oblige you to be much abroad in the open air, such as walking, and riding on horse-back. This will give vigour to your constitutions, and a bloom to your complexions. If you accustom yourselves to go abroad always in chairs and carriages, you will soon become so enervated, as to be unable to go out of doors without them. They are like most articles of luxury, useful and agreeable when judiciously used; but when made habitual, they become both insipid and pernicious.

An attention to your health is a duty you

owe to yourselves and to your friends. Bad health seldom fails to have an influence on the spirits and temper. The finest geniuses, the most delicate minds, have very frequently a correspondent delicacy of bodily constitution which they are too apt to neglect. Their luxury lies in reading, and late hours, equal enemies to health and beauty.

But though good health be one of the greatest blessings of life, never make a boast of it, but enjoy it in grateful silence. We so naturally associate the idea of female softness and delicacy, with a correspondent delicacy of constitution, that when a woman speaks of her great strength, her extraordinary appetite, her ability to bear excessive fatigue, we recoil at the description in a way she is little aware of.

The intention of your being taught needlework, knitting, and such like, is not on account of the intrinsic value of all you can do with your hands, which is trifling, but to enable you to judge more perfectly of that kind of work, and to direct the execution of it in others. Another principal end is to enable you to fill up, in a tolerably agreeable way, some of the many solitary hours you must

necessarily pass at home. It is a great article in the happiness of life, to have your pleasures as independent of others as possible. By continually gadding abroad in search of amusement, you lose the respect of all your acquaintances, whom you oppress with those visits, which, by a more discreet management, might have been courted.

The domestic economy of a family is entirely a woman's province, and furnishes a variety of subjects for the exertion both of good sense and good taste. If you ever come to have the charge of a family, it ought to engage much of your time and attention; nor can you be excused from this by any extent of fortune, though with a narrow one the ruin that follows the neglect of it may be more immediate.

I am at the greatest loss what to advise you in regard to books. There is no impropriety in your reading history, or cultivating any art or science to which genius or accident leads you.—The whole volume of Nature lies open to your eye, and furnishes an infinite variety of entertainment. If I were sure that Nature had given you such strong principles of taste and sentiment as would remain with you, and

FRIENDSHIP, LOVE, MARRIAGE.

THE luxury and dissipation that prevail in genteel life, as it corrupts the heart in many respects, so it renders it incapable of warm, sincere, and steady friendship. A happy choice of friends will be of the utmost consequence to you, as they may assist you by their advice and good offices. But the immediate gratification which friendship affords to a warm, open, and ingenuous heart, is of itself a sufficient motive to court it.

In the choice of your friends, have your principal regard to goodness of heart and fidelity. If they also possess taste and genius, that will still make them more agreeable and useful companions. You have particular reason to place confidence in those who have shewn affection for you in your early days, when you were incapable of making them any return. This is an obligation for which you cannot be too grateful. When you read this, you will naturally think of your mother's friend to whom you owe so much.

If you have the good fortune to meet with any who deserve the name of friends, unbosom yourself to them with the most unsuspicious confidence. It is one of the world's maxims, never to trust any person with a secret, the discovery of which could give you any pain; but it is the maxim of a little mind and a cold heart, unless where it is the effect of frequent disappointments and bad usage. An open temper, if restrained but by tolerable prudence, will make you, on the whole, much happier than a reserved, suspicious one, although you may sometimes suffer by it. Coldness and distrust are but the too certain consequences of age and experience; but they are unpleasant feelings, and need not be anticipated before their time.

But however open you may be in talking of your own affairs, never disclose the secrets of one friend to another. These are sacred deposits, which do not belong to you, nor have you any right to make use of them.

There is another case in which I suspect it is proper to be secret, not so much from motives of prudence, as delicacy; I mean in love matters. Though a woman have no reason to be ashamed of an attachment to a man

of merit, yet nature, whose authority is superior to philosophy, has annexed a sense of shame to it. It is even long before a woman of delicacy dare avow to her own heart that she loves; and when all the subterfuges of ingenuity to conceal it from herself fail, she feels a violence done both to her pride and to her modesty. This I should imagine must always be the case where she is not sure of a return to her attachment.

In such a situation, to lay the heart open to any person whatever, does not appear to me consistent with the perfections of female delicacy.—But perhaps I am in the wrong. At the same time I must tell you, that in point of prudence, it concerns you to attend well to the consequences of such a discovery. These secrets, however important in your own estimation, may appear very trifling to your friend, who possibly will not enter into your feelings, but may rather consider them as a subject of pleasantry. For this reason love-secrets are, of all others, the worst kept.—But the consequences to you may be very serious, as no man of spirit and delicacy ever valued a heart much hackneyed in the ways of love.

If, therefore, you must have a friend to

pour out your heart to, be sure of her honour and secrecy. Let her not be a married woman, especially if she live happily with her husband.—There are certain unguarded moments, in which such a woman, though the best and worthiest of her sex, may let hints escape, which at other times, or to any other person than her husband, she would be incapable of; nor will a husband in this case feel himself under the same obligation of secrecy and honour, as if you had put your confidence originally in himself, especially on a subject which the world is apt to treat so lightly.

If all other circumstances are equal, there are obvious advantages in your making friends of one another. The ties of blood, and your being so much united in one common interest, form an additional bond of union to your friendship. If your brothers should have the good fortune to have hearts susceptible of friendship, to possess truth, honour, sense, and delicacy of sentiment, they are the fittest and most unexceptionable confidants. By placing confidence in them, you will receive every advantage which you could hope for from the friendship of men, without any of the inconveniences that attend such connections with our sex.

Beware of making confidants of your servants. Dignity, not properly understood, very readily degenerates into pride, which enters into no friendships, because it cannot bear an equal, and is so fond of flattery, as to grasp at it even from servants and dependants. The most intimate confidants, therefore, of proud people, are valets-de-chambre and waiting-women. Shew the utmost humanity to your servants; make their situations as comfortable to them as possible—but if you make them your confidants you spoil them, and debase yourselves.

Never allow any person, under the pretended sanction of friendship, to be so familiar as to lose a proper respect for you. Never allow them to tease you on any subject that is disagreeable, or where you have once taken your resolution.—Many will tell you that this reserve is inconsistent with the freedom which friendship allows.—But a certain respect is as necessary in friendship as in love. Without it, you may be liked as a child, but you will never be beloved as an equal.

The temper and dispositions of the heart in your sex make you enter more readily and warmly into friendship than men. Your na-

tural propensity to it is so strong, that you often run into intimacies which you soon have sufficient cause to repent of: and this makes your friendship so very fluctuating.

Another great obstacle to the sincerity, as well as steadiness of your friendships, is the great clashing of your interests in the pursuits of love, ambition, or vanity. For these reasons, it would appear at first view more eligible for you to contract your friendships with the men. Among other obvious advantages of an easy intercourse between the two sexes, it occasions an emulation and exertion in each to excel and be agreeable; hence their respective excellencies are mutually communicated and blended. As their interests in no degree interfere, there can be no foundation for jealousy or suspicion of rivalship. The friendship of a man for a woman is always blended with a tenderness, which he never feels for one of his own sex, even where love is in no degree concerned. Besides, we are conscious of a natural title you have to our protection and good offices, and therefore we feel an additional obligation of honour to serve you, and to observe an inviolable secrecy whenever you confide in us.

But apply these observations with great caution. Thousands of women, of the best hearts and finest parts, have been ruined by men who approach them under the specious name of friendship. But supposing a man to have the most undoubted honour, yet his friendship for a woman is so near a-kin to love, that if she be very agreeable in her person, she will probably very soon find a lover, where she only wished to meet a friend. Let me here, however, warn you against that weakness so common among vain women—the imagination that every man who takes particular notice of you is a lover. Nothing can expose you more to ridicule, than the taking up a man on the suspicion of being your lover, who perhaps never once thought of you in that view, and giving yourselves those airs so common among silly women on such occasions.

There is a kind of unmeaning gallantry much practised by some men, which, if you have any discernment, you will find really harmless; men of this sort will attend you to public places, and be very useful to you by a number of little observances which those of a superior class do not so well understand, or

have not leisure to regard, or perhaps are too proud to submit to. Look on the compliments of such men as words of course, which they repeat to every agreeable woman of their acquaintance. There is a familiarity they are apt to assume, which a proper dignity in your behaviour will be easily able to check.

There is a different species of men whom you may like as agreeable companions, men of worth, taste, and genius, whose conversation, in some respects, may be superior to what you generally meet with among your own sex. It will be foolish in you to deprive yourselves of an useful and agreeable acquaintance, merely because idle people say he is your lover. Such a man may like your company without having any design on your person.

People, whose sentiments, and particularly whose tastes correspond, naturally like to associate together, although neither of them have the most distant view of any further connexion. But as this similarity of minds often gives rise to a more tender attachment than friendship, it will be prudent to keep a watchful eye over yourselves, lest your hearts become too far engaged before you are aware of

it. At the same time, I do not think that your sex, at least in this part of the world, have much of that sensibility which disposes to such attachments. What is commonly called love among you, is rather gratitude, and a partiality to the man who prefers you to the rest of your sex; and such a man you often marry, with little of either personal esteem or affection. Indeed, without an unusual share of natural sensibility, and very peculiar good fortune, a woman in this country has very little probability of marrying for love.

It is a maxim laid down among you, and a very prudent one it is, that love is not to begin on your part, but is entirely to be the consequence of our attachment to you. Now, supposing a woman to have sense and taste, she will not find many men to whom she can possibly be supposed to bear any considerable share of esteem. Among these few, it is a very great chance if any distinguish her particularly. Love, at least with us, is exceedingly capricious, and will not always fix where reason says it should. But supposing one of them should become particularly attached to her, it is still extremely improbable

hat he should be the man in the world her ıeart most approved.

As, therefore, Nature has not given you hat unlimited range in your choice which we ınjoy, she has wisely and benevolently assign-ed to you a greater flexibility of taste on this ıubject. Some agreeable qualities recom-mend a gentleman to your common good-iking and friendship. In the course of his ıcquaintance, he contracts an attachment to ;ou. When you perceive it, it excites your gratitude; this gratitude rises into a prefer-ence, and this preference perhaps at last ad-vances to some degree of attachment, espe-cially if it meet with crosses and difficulties; for these, and a state of suspense, are very great incitements to attachment, and are the food of love in both sexes. If attachment were not excited in your sex in this manner, there is not one of a million of you that could ever marry with any degree of love.

A man of taste and delicacy marries a wo-man because he loves her more than any other. A woman of equal taste and delicacy marries him because she esteems him, and because he gives her that preference. But if a man unfortunately become attached to a

woman whose heart is secretly pre-engaged, his attachment, instead of obtaining a suitable return, is particularly offensive; and if he persist to tease her, he makes himself equally the object of her scorn and aversion.

The effects of love among men are diversified by their different tempers. An artful man may counterfeit every one of them, so as to impose on a young girl of an open, generous, and feeling heart, if she be not extremely on her guard. The finest parts in such a girl may not always prove sufficient for her security. The dark and crooked paths of cunning are unsearchable, and inconceivable to an honourable and elevated mind.

The following, I apprehend, are the most genuine effects of an honourable passion among the men, and the most difficult to counterfeit. A man of delicacy often betrays his passion by his too great anxiety to conceal it, especially if he have little hopes of success. True love, in all its stages, seeks concealment, and never expects success. It renders a man not only respectful, but timid to the highest degree in his behaviour to the woman he loves. To conceal the awe he stands in of her, he may sometimes affect pleasantry, but it sits

awkwardly on him, and he quickly relapses into seriousness, if not into dulness. He magnifies all her real perfections in his imagination, and is either blind to her failings, or converts them into beauties. Like a person conscious of guilt, he is jealous that every eye observes him; and to avoid this, he shuns all the little observances of common gallantry.

His heart and his character will be improved in every respect by his attachment. His manners will become more gentle, and his conversation more agreeable; but diffidence and embarrassment will always make him appear to disadvantage in the company of his mistress. If the fascination continue long, it will totally depress his spirit, and extinguish every active, vigorous, and manly principle of his mind. You will find this subject beautifully and pathetically painted in Thomson's Spring.

When you observe in a gentleman's behaviour these marks which I have described, reflect seriously what you are to do. If his attachment be agreeable to you, I leave you to do as nature, good sense, and delicacy shall direct you. If you love him, let me advise

you never to discover to him the full extent of your love, no not although your marry him. That sufficiently shews your preference, which is all he is entitled to know. If he have delicacy, he will ask for no stronger proof of your affection, for your sake; if he have sense, he will not ask it for his own. This is an unpleasant truth, but it is my duty to let you know it. Violent love cannot subsist, at least cannot be expressed, for any time together on both sides; otherwise the certain consequence, however concealed, is satiety and disgust. Nature in this case has laid the reserve on you.

If you see evident proofs of a gentleman's attachment, and are determined to shut your heart against him, as you ever hope to be used with generosity by the person who shall engage your own heart, treat him honourably and humanely. Do not let him linger in a miserable suspense, but be anxious to let him know your sentiments with regard to him.

However people's hearts may deceive them, there is scarcely a person that can love for any time without at least some distant hope of success. If you really wish to undeceive a lover, you may do it in a variety of ways. There is

a certain species of easy familiarity in your behaviour, which may satisfy him if he have any discernment left, that he has nothing to hope for. But perhaps your particular temper may not admit of this. You may easily shew that you want to avoid his company; but if he be a man whose friendship you wish to preserve, you may not choose this method, because then you lose him in every capacity. —You may get a common friend to explain matters to him, or fall on many other devices, if you are seriously anxious to put him out of suspense.

But if you are resolved against every such method, at least do not shun opportunities of letting him explain himself. If you do this, you act barbarously and unjustly. If he bring you to an explanation, give him a polite, but resolute and decisive answer. In whatever way you convey your sentiments to him, if he be a man of spirit and delicacy, he will give you no further trouble, nor apply to your friends for their intercession. This last is a method of courtship which every man of spirit will disdain. He will never whine nor sue for your pity. That would mortify him almost as much as your scorn. In short, you may

possibly break such a heart, but you can never bend it. Great pride always accompanies delicacy, however concealed under the appearance of the utmost gentleness and modesty, and is the passion of all others the most difficult to conquer.

There is a case where a woman may coquette justifiably to the utmost verge which her conscience will allow. It is where a gentleman purposely declines to make his addresses, till such a time as he thinks himself perfectly sure of her consent. This at bottom is intended to force a woman to give up the undoubted privilege of her sex, the privilege of refusing; it is intended to force her to explain herself, in effect, before the gentleman deigns to do it, and by this means to oblige her to violate the modesty and delicacy of her sex, and to avert the clearest order of nature. All this sacrifice is proposed to be made, merely to gratify a most despicable vanity in a man who would degrade the very woman whom he wishes to make a wife.

It is of great importance to distinguish whether a gentleman who has the appearance of being your lover, delays to speak explicitly, from the motive I have mentioned, o

from a diffidence inseparable from true attachment. In the one case, you can scarcely use him too ill; in the other, you ought to use him with great kindness; and the greatest kindness you can shew him, if you are determined not to listen to his addresses, is to let him know it as soon as possible.

I know the many excuses with which women endeavour to justify themselves to the world, and to their own consciences, when they act otherwise. Sometimes they plead ignorance, or at least uncertainty of the gentleman's real sentiments. That may sometimes be the case. Sometimes they plead the decorum of their sex, which enjoins an equal behaviour to all men, and forbids them to consider any man as a lover till he has directly told them so. Perhaps few women carry their ideas of female delicacy and decorum so far as I do. But I must say you are not entitled to plead the obligation of these virtues, in opposition to the superior ones of gratitude, justice, and humanity. The man is entitled to all these who prefers you to the rest of your sex, and perhaps whose greatest weakness is this very preference.—The truth of the matter is, vanity, and the love of admiration is

Men employed in the pursuits of business, ambition, or pleasure, will not give themselves the trouble to engage a woman's affections merely from the vanity of conquest, and of triumphing over the heart of an innocent and defenceless girl. Besides, people never value much what is entirely in their power. A man of parts, sentiment, and address, if he lay aside all regard to truth and humanity, may engage the hearts of fifty women at the same time, and may likewise conduct his coquetry with so much art as to put it out of the power of any of them to specify a single expression that could be said to be directly expressive of love.

This ambiguity of behaviour, this art of keeping one in suspense, is the great secret of coquetry in both sexes. It is the most cruel in us, because we can carry it what length we please, and continue it as long as we please, without your being so much as at liberty to complain or expostulate; whereas we can break our chain, and force you to explain, whenever we become impatient of our situation.

I have insisted the more particularly on this subject of courtship, because it may most

a generous openness and freedom, he must feel the stroke as a man, but he will likewise bear it as a man; what he suffers he will suffer in silence. Every sentiment of esteem will remain; but love, though it require very little food, and is easily surfeited with too much, yet it requires some. He will view her in the light of a married woman; and though passion subside, yet a man of a candid and generous heart always retains a tenderness for a woman he has once loved, and who has used him well, beyond what he feels for any other of her sex.

If he have not confided his own secret to any body, he has an undoubted title to ask you not to divulge it. If a woman choose to trust any of her companions with her own unfortunate attachments, she may, as it is her own affair alone; but if she have any generosity or gratitude, she will not betray a secret which does not belong to her. Male coquetry is much more inexcusable than female, as well as more pernicious; but it is rare in this country. Very few men will give themselves the trouble to gain or retain any woman's affections, unless they have views on them, either of an honourable or dishonourable kind.

are wanting those qualities which can alone insure happiness in a married state.

I know nothing that renders a woman more despicable than her thinking it essential to happiness to be married. Besides the gross indelicacy of the sentiment, it is a false one, as thousands of women have experienced. But if it were true, the belief that it is so, and the consequent impatience to be married, is the most effectual way to prevent it.

You must not think from this, that I do not wish you to marry. On the contrary, I am of opinion, that you may attain a superior degree of happiness in a married state, to what you can possibly find in any other. I know the forlorn and unprotected situation of an old maid, the chagrin and peevishness which are apt to infect their tempers, and the great difficulty of making a transition, with dignity and cheerfulness, from the period of youth, beauty, admiration, and respect, into the calm, silent, unnoticed retreat of declining years.

I see some unmarried women, of active, vigorous minds, and great vivacity of spirits, degrading themselves; sometimes by entering into a dissipated course of life, unsuitable

to their years, and exposing themselves to the ridicule of girls, who might have been their grand-children; sometimes by oppressing their acquaintances by impertinent instructions into their private affairs; and sometimes by being the propagators of scandal and defamation. All this is owing to an exuberant activity of spirit, which, if it had found employment at home, would have rendered them respectable and useful members of society.

I see other women, in the same situation, gentle, modest, blessed with sense, taste, delicacy, and every milder feminine virtue of the heart, but of weak spirits, bashful, and timid; I see such women sinking into obscurity and insignificance, and gradually losing every elegant accomplishment; for this evident reason, that they are not united to a partner who has sense, and worth, and taste, to know their value; one who is able to draw forth their concealed qualities, and shew them to advantage; who can give that support to their feeble spirits, which they stand so much in need of; and who, by his affection and tenderness, might make such a woman happy, in exerting every talent, and accomplishing herself in

every elegant art that could contribute to his amusement.

In short, I am of opinion, that a married state, if entered into from proper motives of esteem and affection, will be the happiest for yourselves, make you most respectable in the eyes of the world, and the most useful members of society. But I confess I am not enough of a patriot, to wish you to marry for the good of the public. I wish you to marry for no other reason but to make yourselves happier. When I am so particular in my advice about your conduct, I own my heart beats with the fond hope of making you worthy the attachment of men who will deserve you, and be sensible of your merit. But Heaven forbid you should ever relinquish the ease and independence of a single life, to become the slaves of a fool or a tyrant's caprice!

As these have been always my sentiments; I shall do you but justice, when I leave you in such independent circumstances as may lay you under no temptation to do from necessity, what you would never do from choice. —This will likewise save you from that cruel mortification to a woman of spirit, the sus-

picion that a gentleman thinks he does you an honour or a favour when he asks you for his wife.

If I live till you arrive at that age when you shall be capable to judge for yourselves, and do not strangely alter my sentiment, I shall act towards you in a very different manner from what most parents do. My opinion has always been, that when that period arrives, the parental authority ceases.

I hope I shall always treat you with that affection and easy confidence which may dispose you to look on me as your friend. In that capacity alone I shall think myself entitled to give you my opinion; in the doing of which I should think myself highly criminal, if I did not, to the utmost of my power, endeavour to divest myself of all personal vanity, and all prejudices in favour of my particular taste. If you did not choose to follow my advice, I should not on that account cease to love you as my children. Though my right to your obedience were expired, yet I should think nothing could release me from the ties of nature and humanity.

You may perhaps imagine that the reserved behaviour which I recommend to you,

and your appearing seldom at public places, must cut off all opportunities of your being acquainted with gentlemen. I am very far from intending this. I advise you to no reserve but what will render you more respected and beloved by our sex. I do not think public places suited to make people acquainted together. They can only be distinguished there by their looks and external behaviour. But it is in private companies alone where you can expect ease and agreeable conversation, which I should never wish you to decline. If you do not allow gentlemen to become acquainted with you, you can never expect to marry with attachment on either side.—Love is very seldom produced at first sight; at least, it must have, in that case, a very unjustifiable foundation. True love is founded on esteem, in a correspondence of tastes and sentiments, and steals on the heart imperceptibly.

There is one advice I shall leave you, to which I beg your particular attention. Before your affections come to be in the least engaged to any man, examine your tempers, your tastes, and your hearts, very severely, *and* settle in your own minds what are the re-

quisites to your happiness in a married state; and as it is almost impossible that you should get every thing you wish, come to a steady determination what you are to consider as essential, and what may be sacrificed.

If you have hearts disposed by nature for love and friendship, and possess those feelings which enable you to enter into all the refinements and delicacies of these attachments, consider well, for Heaven's sake, and as you value your future happiness, before you give them any indulgence. If you have the misfortune (for a very great misfortune it commonly is to your sex) to have such a temper and such sentiments deeply rooted in you, if you have spirit and resolution to resist the solicitations of vanity, the persecution of friends (for you will have lost the only friend that would never persecute you) and can support the prospect of the many inconveniences attending the state of an old maid, which I formerly pointed out, then you may indulge yourselves in that kind of sentimental reading and conversation which is most correspondent to your feelings.

But if you find, on a strict self-examination, that marriage is absolutely essential to

your happiness, keep the secret inviolable in your own bosoms, for the reason I formerly mentioned; but shun, as you would do the most fatal poison, all that species of reading and conversation which warms the imagination—which engages and softens the heart, and raises the taste above the level of common life. If you do otherwise, consider the terrible conflict of passions this may afterwards raise in your breasts.

If this refinement once take deep root in your minds, and you do not obey its dictates, but marry from vulgar and mercenary views, you may never be able to eradicate it entirely, and then it will embitter all your married days. Instead of meeting with sense, delicacy, tenderness, a lover, a friend, an equal companion, in a husband, you may be tired with insipidity and dulness; shocked with indelicacy, or mortified by indifference. You will find none to compassionate, or even understand your sufferings; for your husbands may not use you cruelly, and may give you as much money for your clothes, personal expense, and domestic necessaries, as is suitable to their fortunes. The world would therefore look on *you* as unreasonable women, and that did not

deserve to be happy, if you were not so. To avoid these complicated evils, if you are determined at all events to marry, I would advise you to make all your reading and amusements of such a kind as do not affect the heart nor the imagination, except in the way of wit or humour.

I have no view by these advices to lead your tastes; I only want to persuade you of the necessity of knowing your own minds, which, though seemingly very easy, is what your sex seldom attain on many important occasions in life, but particularly on this of which I am speaking. There is not a quality I more anxiously wish you to possess, than that collected, decisive spirit which rests on itself, which enables you to see where your true happiness lies, and to pursue it with the most determined resolution. In matters of business, follow the advice of those who know them better than yourselves, and in whose integrity you can confide; but in matters of taste, that depend on your own feelings, consult no one friend whatever, but consult your own hearts.

If a gentleman make his addresses to you, or give you reason to believe he will do so,

before you allow your affections to be engaged, endeavour, in the most prudent and secret manner, to procure from your friends every necessary piece of information concerning him; such as his character for sense, his morals, his temper, fortune and family; whether it be distinguished for parts and worth, or for folly, knavery, and loathsome hereditary diseases. When your friends inform you of these, they have fulfilled their duty. If they go further, they have not that deference for you which a becoming dignity on your part would effectually command.

Whatever your views are in marrying, take every possible precaution to prevent their being disappointed. If fortune, and the pleasure it brings, are your aim, it is not sufficient that the settlements of a jointure and childrens' provisions be ample, and properly secured; it is necessary that you should enjoy the fortune during your own life. The principal security you can have for this will depend on your marrying a good natured, generous man, who despises money, and who will let you live, where you can best enjoy that pleasure, that pomp and parade of life for which you married him.

From what I have said, you will easily see that I could never pretend to advise whom you should marry; but I can with great confidence advise whom you should not marry.

Avoid a companion that may entail any hereditary disease on your posterity, particularly (that most dreadful of all human calamities) madness. It is the height of imprudence to run into such a danger, and, in my opinion, highly criminal.

Do not marry a fool; he is the most intractable of all animals; he is led by his passions and caprices, and is incapable of hearing the voice of reason. It may probably too, hurt your vanity to have husbands for whom you have reason to blush and tremble every time they open their lips in company. But the worst circumstance that attends a fool, is his constant jealousy of his wife being thought to govern him. This renders it impossible to lead him, as he is continually doing absurd and disagreeable things, for no other reason but to shew he dares do them.

A rake is always a suspicious husband, because he has only known the most worthless of your sex. He likewise entails the worst

diseases on his wife and children, if he have the misfortune to have any.

If you have a sense of religion yourselves, do not think of husbands who have none. If they have tolerable understandings, they will be glad that you have religion, for their own sakes, and for the sake of their families; but it will sink you in their esteem, if they are weak men; they will be continually teasing and shocking you about your principles.—If you have children, you will suffer the most bitter distress, in seeing all your endeavours to form their minds to virtue and piety, all your endeavours to secure their present and eternal happiness, frustrated, and turned into ridicule.

As I look on your choice of a husband to be of the greatest consequence to your happiness, I hope you will make it with the utmost circumspection. Do not give way to a sudden sally of passion, and dignify it with a name of love.—Genuine love is not founded in caprice; it is founded in nature, on honourable views, on virtue, on similarity of tastes, and sympathy of souls.

If you have these sentiments, you will never marry any one, when you are not in that

situation, in point of fortune, which is necessary to the happiness of either of you. What that competency may be, can only be determined by your own tastes. It would be ungenerous in you to take advantage of a lover's attachment, to plunge him into distress; and if he have any honour, no personal gratification will ever tempt him to enter into any connexion which will render you unhappy. If you have as much between you as to satisfy all your demands, it is sufficient.

I shall conclude with endeavouring to remove a difficulty which must naturally occur to any woman of reflection on the subject of marriage. What is to become of all those refinements of delicacy, that dignity of manners, which checked all familiarities, and suspended desire in respectful and awful admiration? In answer to this, I shall only observe, that if motives of interest or vanity have had any share in your resolutions to marry, none of these chimerical notions will give you any pain; nay, they will very quickly appear as ridiculous in your own eyes, as they probably always did in the eyes of your husbands. They have been sentiments which have floated in your imaginations, but have never

reached your hearts. But if these sentiments have been truly genuine, and if you have had the singular happy fate to attach those who understand them, you have no reason to be afraid.

Marriage, indeed, will at once dispel the enchantment raised by external beauty; but the virtues and graces that first warmed the heart, that reserve and delicacy which always left the lover something further to wish, and often made him doubtful of your sensibility or attachment, may and ought ever to remain. The tumult of passion will necessarily subside; but it will be succeeded by an endearment that affects the heart in a more equal, more sensible, and tender manner—But I must check myself, and not indulge in description that may mislead you, and that too sensibly awake the remembrance of my happier days, which, perhaps, it were better for me to forget for ever.

I have thus given you my opinion on some of the most important articles of your future life, chiefly calculated for that period when you are just entering the world. I have endeavoured to avoid some peculiarities of opinion, which from their contradiction to the

eral practice of the world, I might reason-
have suspected were not so well founded.
in writing to you, I am afraid my heart
been too full, and too warmly interested,
allow me to keep this resolution. This
have produced some embarrassment, and
e seeming contradictions. What I have
ten has been the amusement of some so-
y hours, and has served to divert some
ancholy reflections. I am conscious I
ertook a task to which I was very unequal;
I have discharged a part of my duty.—
I will at least be pleased with it, as the
mark of your father's love and attention.

MISCELLANEOUS

EXTRACTS,

TAKEN FROM

THE EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE,

A RECENT PUBLICATION IN ENGLAND,

OF HIGH AND MERITED CELEBRITY

IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.

The following, which has merit worthy to be written in "Letters of gold," is from TRACTS entertaining, moral, and religious," *generally considered as from the pen of that modern ornament of the sex,* MISS HANNAH MOOR.

THE SHEPHERD OF SALISBURY PLAIN.

MR JOHNSON, a very worthy, charitable Gentleman, was travelling sometime ago across one of those vast Plains which are well known in Wiltshire. It was a fine summer's evening, and he rode slowly, that he might have leisure to admire God in the works of his creation. For this Gentleman was of opinion, that a walk or a ride, was as proper a time as any to think about good things; for which reason, on such occasions, he seldom thought so much about his money or his trade, or public news, as at other times, that he might, with more ease and satisfaction, enjoy the pious thoughts which the visible

works of the great Maker of heaven and earth are intended to raise in the mind.

His attention was all of a sudden called off by the barking of a Shepherd's dog; and looking up, he spied one of those little huts, which are here and there to be seen on those great Downs; and near it was a Shepherd himself, busily employed with his dog in collecting together his vast flock of sheep. As he drew nearer, he perceived him to be a clean, well looking, poor man, near fifty years of age. His coat, though at first it had probably been of one dark colour, had been in a long course of years so often patched with different sorts of cloth, that it was now become hard to say which had been the original colour. But this, while it gave a plain proof of the Shepherd's poverty, equally proved the exceeding neatness, industry, and good management of his wife. His stockings no less proved her good housewifery, for they were entirely covered with darns of different coloured worsted, but had not a hole in them; and his shirt, though nearly as coarse as the sails of a ship, was as white as the drifted snow, and was neatly mended where time had either made a rent or worn it thin. This furnishes

a rule of judging, by which one shall seldom be deceived. If I meet with a labourer, hedging, ditching, or mending the highways, with his stockings and shirt tight and whole, however mean and bad his other garments are, I have seldom failed, on visiting his cottage, to find that also clean and well ordered, and his wife notable, and worthy of encouragement. Whereas a poor woman, who will be lying a bed, or gossipping with her neighbours when she ought to be fitting out her husband in a cleanly manner, will seldom be found to be very good in other respects.

This was not the case with our Shepherd: and Mr. Johnson was not more struck with the decency of his mean and frugal dress, than with his open, honest countenance, which bore strong marks of health, cheerfulness, and spirit.

Mr. Johnson, who was on a journey, and somewhat fearful from the appearance of the sky, that rain was at no great distance, accosted the Shepherd with asking what sort of weather he thought it would be on the morrow.—It will be such weather as pleases me, answered the Shepherd. Though the answer was delivered in the mildest and the civ-

ilest tone that could be imagined, the Gentleman thought the words themselves rather rude and surly, and asked him how that could be: Because, replied the Shepherd, it will be such weather as shall please God, and whatever pleases him always pleases me.

Mr. Johnson, who delighted in good men and good things, was very well satisfied with his reply. For he justly thought, that though an hypocrite may easily contrive to appear better than he really is to a stranger, and that no one should be too soon trusted, merely for having a few good words in his mouth; yet as he knew that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," he always accustomed himself to judge favourably of those who had a serious deportment and solid manner of speaking. It looks as if it proceeded from a good habit, said he, and though I may now and then be deceived by it, yet it has not often happened to me to be so. Whereas if a man accost me with an idle, dissolute, vulgar, indecent, or profane expression, I have never been deceived in him, but have generally, on inquiry, found his character to be as bad as his language gave me room to expect.

He entered into conversation with the Shep-

herd in the following manner:—Yours is a troublesome life, honest friend, said he.—To be sure, sir, replied the Shepherd, 'tis not a very lazy life; but 'tis not near so toilsome as that which my GREAT MASTER led for my sake; and he had every state and condition of life at his choice, and chose a hard one; while I only submit to the lot that is appointed me.—You are exposed to great cold and heat, said the gentleman;—true, sir, said the shepherd; but then I am not exposed to great temptations; and so throwing one thing against another, God is pleased to contrive to make things more equal than we poor, ignorant, short-sighted creatures, are apt to think. David was happier when he kept his father's sheep on such a plain as this, and employed in singing some of his own Psalms, perhaps, than ever he was when he became king of Israel and Judah. And I dare say we should never have had some of the most beautiful texts in all those fine Psalms, if he had not been a shepherd, which enabled him to make so many fine comparisons and similitudes, as one may say, from country life, flocks of sheep, hills and vallies, and fountains of water.

You think, then, said the gentleman, that a laborious life is a happy one. I do, sir, and more so, especially as it exposes a man to fewer sins. If king Saul had continued a poor, laborious man to the end of his days, he might have lived happy and honest, and died a natural death in his bed at last, which you know, sir, was more than he did. But I speak with reverence, for it was divine Providence over-ruled all that, you know, sir, and I do not presume to make comparisons. Besides, sir, my employment has been particularly honoured: Moses was a shepherd in the plains of Midian. It was to "Shepherds keeping their flocks by night," that the angels appeared in Bethlehem, to tell the best news, the gladdest tidings, that ever were revealed to poor, sinful men: often and often has the thought warmed my poor heart in the coldest night, and filled me with more joy and thankfulness than the best supper could have done.

Here the shepherd stopped, for he began to feel that he had made too free, and had talked too long. But Mr. Johnson was so well pleased with what he said, and with the cheerful, contented manner in which he said it, that he desired him to go on freely, for

that it was a pleasure to him to meet with a plain man, who, without any kind of learning but what he had got from the bible, was able to talk so well on a subject in which all men, high and low, rich and poor, are equally concerned.

Indeed I am afraid I make too bold, sir, for it better becomes me to listen to such a gentleman as you seem to be, than to talk in my poor way; but as I was saying, sir, I wonder all working men do not derive as great joy and delight as I do from thinking how God has honoured poverty! O, sir, what great, or rich, or mighty men have had such honour put on them or their condition, as shepherds, tent-makers, fishermen, and carpenters have had?

My honest friend, said the gentleman, I perceive you are well acquainted with Scripture. Yes, sir, pretty well, blessed be God! through his mercy I learnt to read when I was a little boy; though reading was not so common when I was a child, as I am told, through the goodness of Providence and the generosity of the rich, it is likely to become now-a-days. I believe there is no day for the last thirty years, that I have not peeped at my

bible. If we can't find time to read a chapter, I defy any man to say he can't find time to read a verse; and a single text, sir, well followed and put in practice every day, would make no bad figure at the year's end; three hundred and sixty-five texts, without the loss of a single moment's time, would make a pretty stock, a little golden treasury, as one may say, from new-year's day to new-year's day; and if children were brought up to it, they would come to look for their text as naturally as they do for their breakfast. No labouring man, 'tis true, has so much leisure as a shepherd, for while the flock is feeding, I am obliged to be still, and at such times I can now and then tap a shoe for my children or myself, which is a great saving to us; and while I am doing that, I repeat a bit of a chapter, which makes the time pass pleasantly in this wild solitary place. I can say the best part of the bible by heart; I believe I should not say the best part, for every part is good, but I mean the greatest part. I have led but a lonely life, and have often had but little to eat, but my bible has been meat, drink and company to me, as I may say, and when want and trouble have come upon me, I don't

know what I should have done indeed, sir, if I had not had the promises of this book for my stay and support.

You have had great difficulties then, said Mr. Johnson. Why, as to that, sir, not more than neighbour's fare; I have but little cause to complain, and much to be thankful; but I have had some little struggles, as I will leave you to judge. I have a wife and eight children, whom I brought up in that little cottage which you see under that hill about half a mile off. What, that with the smoke coming out of the chimney? said the gentleman. O no, sir, replied the shepherd, smiling, we have seldom smoke in the evening, for we have little to cook, and firing is very dear in these parts. 'Tis that cottage which you see on the left hand of the church, near that little tuft of hawthorns. What, that hovel, with only one room above and below, with scarcely any chimney? How is it possible you can live there with such a family? O! it is very possible and very certain too, cried the shepherd. How many better men have been worse lodged! How many good Christians have perished in prisons and dungeons, in comparison of which my cottage is a palace!

The house is very well, sir, and if the rain did not sometimes beat down upon us through the thatch when we are abed, I should not desire a better; for I have health, peace, and liberty, and no man maketh me afraid.

Well, I will certainly call on you before it be long; but how can you contrive to lodge so many children? We do the best we can, sir. My poor wife is a very sickly woman, or we should always have done tolerably well. There are no gentry in the parish, so that she has not met with any great assistance in her sickness. The good curate of the parish, who lives in that pretty parsonage in the valley, is very willing, but not very able to assist us on these trying occasions, for he has little enough for himself, and a large family into the bargain. Yet he does what he can, and more than many richer men do, and more than he can well afford. Besides that, his prayers and good advice we are always sure of, and we are truly thankful for that, for a man must give, you know, sir, according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not.

Are you in any distress at present, said Mr. Johnson? No, sir, thank God, replied the

shepherd. I get my shilling a day, and most of my children will soon be able to earn something; for we have only three under five years old. Only! said the gentleman, that is a heavy burden. Not at all; God fits the back to it. Though my wife is not able to do any out-of-door work, yet she breeds up her children to such habits of industry, that our little maids, before they are six years old, can first get a halfpenny, and then a penny a day by knitting. The boys who are too little to do hard work, get a trifle by keeping the birds off the corn; for this the farmers will give them a penny or two-pence, and now and then a bit of bread and cheese into the bargain. When the season of crow-keeping is over, then they glean or pick stones; any thing is better than idleness, sir; and if they did not get a farthing by it, I would make them do it just the same, for the sake of giving them early habits of labour.

So you see, sir, I am not so badly off as many are; nay, if it were not that it costs me so much in 'potecary's stuff for my poor wife, I should reckon myself well off; nay, I do reckon myself well off, for, blessed be God, he has granted her life to my prayers,

and I would work myself to a 'natomy, and live on one meal a day, to add any comfort to her valuable life; indeed I have often done the last, and thought it no great matter neither.

While they were in this part of the discourse, a fine, plump, cherry-cheek little girl ran up out of breath, with a smile on her young happy face, and without taking any notice of the gentleman, cried out with great joy—Look here, father, only see how much I have got to-day! Mr. Johnson was much struck with her simplicity, but puzzled to know what was the occasion of this great joy. On looking at her he perceived a small quantity of coarse wool, some of which had found its way through the holes of her clean but scanty and ragged woollen apron. The father said, this has been a successful day indeed, Molly, but don't you see the gentleman? Molly now made a courtesy down to the very ground; while Mr. Johnson inquired into the cause of the mutual satisfaction which both father and daughter had expressed, at the unusual good fortune of the day.

Sir, said the shepherd, poverty is a great sharpener of the wits.—My wife and I cannot

endure to see our children (poor as they are) without shoes and stockings, not only on account of the pinching cold which cramps their poor little limbs, but because it degrades and debases them; and poor people, who have but little regard to appearances, will seldom be found to have any great regard for honesty and goodness; I don't say this is always the case; but I am sure it is so too often. Now shoes and stockings being very dear, we could never afford to get them without a little contrivance. I must shew you how I manage about the shoes when you condescend to call at our cottage, sir; as to stockings, this is one way we take to help to get them—My young ones, who are too little to do much work, sometimes wander at odd hours over the hills for the chance of finding what little wool the sheep may drop when they rub themselves, as they are apt to do, against the bushes.* These scattered bits of wool, the children pick out of the brambles, which I see have torn sad holes in Molly's apron to-day; they carry this wool home, and when they have

* This piece of frugal industry is not imaginary, but a real fact, as is the character of the shepherd, and his uncommon knowledge of the Scriptures.

got a pretty parcel together, their mother cards it; for she can sit and card in the chimney corner, when she is not able to wash, or work about house. The biggest girl then spins it; it does very well for us without dying, for poor people must not stand for the colour of their stockings. After this our little boys knit it for themselves, while they are employed in keeping cows in the fields, and after they get home at night. As for the knitting the girls and their mother do, that is chiefly for sale, which helps to pay our rent.

Mr. Johnson lifted up his eyes in silent astonishment at the shifts which honest poverty can make rather than beg or steal; and was surprised to think how many ways of subsisting there are which those who live at their ease little suspect. He secretly resolved to be more attentive to his own petty expenses than he had hitherto been; and to be more watchful that nothing was wasted in his family.

But to return to the shepherd. Mr. Johnson told him, that as he must needs be at his friend's house, who lived many miles off, that night, he could not, as he wished to do, make a visit to his cottage at present. But I will

certainly do it, said he, on my return, for I long to see your wife and her nice little family, and be an eye-witness of her neatness and good management. The poor man's tears started into his eyes on hearing the commendation bestowed on his poor wife; and wiping them off with the sleeve of his coat, for he was not worth a handkerchief in the world, he said—O, sir, you just now, I am afraid, called me a humble man, but indeed I am a very proud one. Proud! exclaimed Mr. Johnson, I hope not—Pride is a great sin, and as the poor are liable to it as well as the rich, so good a man as you seem to be, ought to guard against it. Sir, said he, you are right, but I am not proud of myself, God knows, I have nothing to be proud of. I am a poor sinner; but indeed, sir, I am proud of my wife; she is not only the most tidy, notable woman on the Plain, but she is the kindest wife and mother, and the most contented, thankful Christian that I know. Last year I thought I should have lost her in a violent fit of the rheumatism, caught by going to work too soon after her lying-in, I fear: for 'tis but a bleak, coldish place, as you may see, sir, in winter; and sometimes the snow

lies so long under the hill, that I can hardly make myself a path to get out and buy a few necessaries in the next village; and we are afraid to send out the children, for fear they should be lost when the snow is deep. So, as I was saying, the poor soul was very bad indeed, and for several weeks lost the use of all her limbs except her hands; a merciful Providence spared her the use of these, so that when she could not turn in bed, she could contrive to patch a rag or two for her family. She was always saying, had it not been for the great goodness of God, she might have had her hands lame as well as her feet, or the palsy instead of the rheumatism, and then she could have done nothing—but nobody had so many mercies as she had.

I will not tell you what we suffered during the bitter weather, sir, but my wife's faith and patience during that trying time, were as good a lesson to me as any sermon I could hear, and that Mr. Jenkins gave us very comfortable lessons also, that helped to keep up my spirits.

One Sunday afternoon when my wife was at the worst, as I was coming out of church, for I went one part of the day, and my eldest

daughter the other, so my poor wife was never left alone; as I was coming out of church, I say, Mr. Jenkins, the minister, called out to me, and asked me how my wife did, saying he had been kept from coming to see her by the deep fall of snow; and indeed from the parsonage-house to my hovel it was quite impassable. I gave him all the particulars he asked, and I am afraid a good many more, for my heart was quite full. He kindly gave me a shilling, and said he would certainly try to pick out his way and come and see her in a day or two.

While he was talking to me, a plain farmer-looking gentleman in boots, who stood by, listened to all I said, but seemed to take no notice. It was Mr Jenkins's wife's father, who was come to pass the Christmas-holidays at the parsonage-house. I had always heard him spoken of as a plain, frugal man, who lived close himself, but was remarked to give away more than any of his show-a-way neighbours.

Well! I went home with great spirits at this seasonable and unexpected supply; for we had tapped our last sixpence, and there was little work to be had on account of the

weather. I told my wife I had not come back empty handed. No, I dare say not, says she, you have been serving a master "who filleth the hungry with good things, though he sendeth the rich empty away." True, Mary, says I, we seldom fail to get good spiritual food from Mr. Jenkins, but to-day he has kindly supplied our bodily wants. She was more thankful when I shewed her the shilling, than, I dare say some of your great people are when they get a hundred pounds.

Mr. Johnson's heart smote him when he heard such a value set upon a shilling; surely, said he, to himself, I will never waste another; but he said nothing to the shepherd, who thus pursued his story.

Next morning before I went out, I sent part of the money to buy a little ale and brown sugar, to put into her water-gruel; which you know, sir, made it nice and nourishing. I went out to cleave wood in a farm-yard, for there was no standing out on the Plain, after such a snow as had fallen in the night. I went with a lighter heart than usual, because I had left my poor wife a little better, and comfortably supplied for this day, and I

now resolved more than ever, to trust God for the supplies of the next. When I came back at night, my wife fell a crying as soon as she saw me. This, I own, I thought but a bad return for the blessings she had so lately received, and so I told her. O, said she, it is too much, we are too rich; I am now frightened, not lest we should have no portion in this world, but for fear we should have our whole portion in it. Look here, John! So saying, she uncovered the bed whereon she lay, and shewed me two warm, thick, new blankets. I could not believe my own eyes, sir, because when I went out in the morning, I had left her with no other covering than our little old thin blue rug. I was still more amazed when she put half a crown into my hand, telling me she had a visit from Mr. Jenkins, and Mr. Jones, the latter of whom had bestowed all these good things upon us. Thus, sir, have our lives been crowned with mercies. My wife got about again, and I do believe, under Providence, it was owing to these comforts; for the rheumatism, sir, without blankets by night and flannel by day, is but a baddish job, especially to people who have but little or no fire. She will always be a

weakly body; but thank God, her soul prospers, and is in health. But I beg your pardon, sir, for talking on at this rate.—Not at all, not at all, said Mr. Johnson: I am much pleased with your story; you shall certainly see me in a few days. Good night. So saying, he slipped a crown into his hand, and rode off. Surely, said the shepherd, "*goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life*," as he gave the money to his wife when he got home at night.

As to Mr. Johnson, he found abundant matter for his thoughts during the rest of his journey. On the whole, he was more disposed to envy than to pity the shepherd. I have seldom seen, said he, so happy a man. It is a sort of happiness which the world could not give, and which, I plainly see, it has not been able to take away. This must be the true spirit of religion. I see more and more, that true goodness is not merely a thing of words and opinions, but a living Principle brought into every common action of a man's life. What else could have supported this poor couple under every bitter trial of want and sickness? No, my honest shepherd, I do not pity, but I respect and even honour

thee; and I will visit thy poor hovel on my return to Salisbury with as much pleasure as I am now going to the house of my friend.

PART II.

I AM willing to hope that my readers will not be sorry to hear some farther particulars of their old acquaintance *the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain.* They will call to mind that at the end of the First Part, he was returning home full of gratitude for the favours he had received from Mr. Johnson, whom we left pursuing his journey, after having promised to make a visit to the shepherd's cottage.

Mr. Johnson, after having passed some time with his friend, set out on his return to Salisbury, and on the Saturday evening reached a very small inn, a mile or two distant from the shepherd's village; for he never travelled on a Sunday. He went next morning to the church nearest the house where he had passed the night; and, after taking such refreshment as he could get at that house, he walked on to find out the shepherd's cottage. His reason for visiting him on a Sunday was chief-

ly because he supposed it to be the only day which the shepherd's employment allowed him to pass at home with his family; and as Mr. Johnson had been struck with his talk, he thought it would be neither unpleasant nor unprofitable to observe how a man who carried such an appearance of piety, spent his Sunday; for though he were so low in the world, this gentleman was not above entering very closely into his character, of which he thought he should be able to form a better judgment, by seeing whether his practice at home kept pace with his profession abroad. For it is not so much by observing how people talk, as how they live, that we ought to judge of their characters.

After a pleasant walk, Mr. Johnson got within sight of the cottage, to which he was directed by the clump of hawthorns and the broken chimney. He wished to take the family by surprise; and walking gently up to the house, he stood awhile to listen. The door being half open, he saw the shepherd (who looked so respectable in his Sunday coat that he should hardly have known him) his wife and their numerous family, drawing round their little table, which was covered with a

clean though very coarse cloth. There stood on it a large dish of potatoes, a brown pitcher, and a piece of a coarse loaf. The wife and children stood in silent attention, while the shepherd, with up-lifted hands and eyes, devoutly begged the blessing of Heaven on their homely fare. Mr. Johnson could not help sighing to reflect, that he had sometimes seen better dinners eaten with less appearance of thankfulness.

The shepherd and his wife then sat down with great seeming cheerfulness, but the children stood; and while the mother was helping them, little fresh-coloured Molly, who had picked the wool from the bushes with so much delight, cried out, "father, I wish I was big enough to say grace, I am sure I could say it very heartily to-day, for I was thinking what must *poor* people do who have no salt to their potatoes; and do but look, our dish is quite full." "That is the true way of thinking, Molly," said the father; "in whatever concerns bodily wants, and bodily comforts, it is our duty to compare our own lot with the lot of those who are worse off, and this will keep us thankful. On the other hand, whenever we are tempted to set up our own

wisdom or goodness, we must compare ourselves with those who are wiser and better, and that will keep us humble." Molly was now so hungry, and found the potatoes so good, that she had no time to make any more remarks; but was devouring her dinner very heartily, when the barking of the great dog drew her attention from her trencher to the door, and spying the stranger, she cried out, "Look, father, see here, is not that the good gentleman!" Mr. Johnson finding himself discovered, immediately walked in, and was heartily welcomed by the honest shepherd, who told his wife that this was the gentleman to whom they were so much obliged.

The good woman began, as some very neat people are rather too apt to do, with making many apologies that her house was not cleaner, and that things were not in fitter order to receive such a gentleman. Mr. Johnson, however, on looking round, could discover nothing but the most perfect neatness. The trenchers on which they were eating, were almost as white as their linen; and notwithstanding the number and smalness of the children, there was not the least appearance of dirt or litter. The furniture was very sim-

ple and poor, hardly indeed amounting to bare necessaries. It consisted of four broken wooden chairs, which, by constant rubbing, were become as bright as a looking-glass; an iron pot and kettle; a poor old grate which scarcely had a handful of coal, and out of which the little fire that had been in it appeared to have been taken as soon as it had answered the end for which it had been lighted, that of boiling their potatoes. Over the chimney stood an old-fashioned, broad, bright candlestick, and a still brighter spit; it was pretty clear that this last was kept rather for ornament than use. An old carved elbow chair, and a chest of the same date, which stood in the corner, were considered as the most valuable part of the shepherd's goods, having been in his family for three generations. But all these were lightly esteemed by him, in comparison of another possession, which added to the above, made up the whole of what he had inherited from his father; and which last he would not have parted with, if no other could have been had, for a king's ransom: this was a large old Bible, which lay on the window seat, neatly covered with brown cloth, variously patched. This sacred book

was most reverently preserved from dog's ears, dirt, and every other injury, but such as time and much use had made it suffer, in spite of care. On the clean white walls were pasted a hymn on the crucifixion of our Saviour, a print of the prodigal son, the shepherd's hymn, and a *New History of a True Book.*

After the first salutations were over, Mr. Johnson said, that if they would go on quietly with their dinner, he would sit down. Though a good deal ashamed, they thought it more respectful to obey the gentleman, who having cast his eye on their slender provisions, gently rebuked the shepherd for not having indulged himself, as it was Sunday, with a morsel of bacon to relish his potatoes. The shepherd said nothing, but poor Mary coloured and hung down her head, saying, 'indeed, sir, it was not my fault, I did beg my husband to allow himself a bit of meat to-day out of your honour's bounty; but he was too good to do it, and it is all for my sake.'—The shepherd seemed unwilling to come to an explanation, but Mr. Johnson desired Mary to go on. So she continued, 'you must know, sir, that both of us, next to a sin, dread a debt, and *indeed* in some cases, a debt is a sin; but

with all our care and pains we have never been able quite to pay off the doctor's bill, for that bad fit of rheumatism which I had last winter. Now when you were pleased to give my husband that kind present the other day, I heartily desired him to buy a bit of meat for Sunday, as I said before, that he might have a little refreshment out of your kindness.—But, answered he, Mary, it is never out of my mind long together that we still owe a few shillings to the doctor (and thank God it is all we did owe in the world.)—Now if I carry him this money directly, it will not only shew him our honesty and our good will, but it will be an encouragement to him to come to you another time in case you should be taken once more in such a bad fit; for I must own, added my poor husband, that the thought of your being so terribly ill without any help, is the only misfortune that I want courage to face.

Here the grateful woman's tears ran down so fast that she could not go on. She wiped them with the corner of her apron, and humbly begged pardon for making so free. 'Indeed, sir,' said the shepherd, 'though my wife is full as unwilling to be in debt as myself, yet I could hardly prevail on her to con-

sent to my paying this money just then, because, she said, it was hard I should not have a taste of the gentleman's bounty myself. But for once, sir, I would have my own way. For you must know, as I pass the best part of my time alone, tending my sheep, it is a great point with me, sir, to get comfortable matter for my own thoughts; so that, 'tis rather self-interest in me to allow myself no pleasures and no practices that won't bear thinking on over and over. For when one is a good deal alone, you know, sir, all one's bad deeds do so rush in upon one, as I may say, and so torment one, that there is no true comfort to be had but in keeping clear of wrong doings, and false pleasures; and that I suppose may be one reason why so many folks hate to stay a bit by themselves. But as I was saying, when I came to think the matter over on the hill yonder, said I to myself, a good dinner is a good thing I grant, and yet it will be but old comfort to me a week after, to be able to say—to be sure I had a nice shoulder of mutton last Sunday for dinner, thanks to the good gentleman, but then I am in debt—I *had* a rare dinner, that's certain, but the pleasure of *that* has long been over, and the debt still re-

mains—I have spent the crown, and now if my poor wife should be taken in one of those fits again, die she must, unless God work a miracle to prevent it, for I can get no help for her. This thought settled all; and I set off directly and paid the crown to the doctor with as much cheerfulness as I should have felt on sitting down to the fattest shoulder of mutton that ever was roasted. And if I were contented at the time, think how much more happy I have been at the remembrance! O, sir, there are no pleasures worth the name but such as bring no plague or penitence after them.

Mr. Johnson was satisfied with the shepherd's reasons; and agreed, that though a good dinner were not to be despised, yet it were not worthy to be compared with *a contented mind*, which (as the bible says) '*is a continual feast.*' 'But come' said the good gentleman, 'what have we got in this brown mug?'—'As good water,' said the shepherd, 'as any in the king's dominions. I have heard of countries beyond sea in which there is no wholesome water; nay, I have been myself in a great town not far off, where they are obliged to buy all the water they get,

while a good Providence sends to my very door a spring as clear and fine as Jacob's well. When I am tempted to repine that I have often no other drink, I call to mind, that it was nothing better than a cup of cold water which the woman of Samaria drew for the greatest guest that ever visited this world.'

'Very well,' replied Mr. Johnson; 'but as your honesty has made you prefer a poor meal to being in debt, I will at least send and get something for you to drink. I saw a little public house just by the church, as I came along. Let that little rosy-faced fellow fetch a mug of beer.'

So saying, he looked full at the boy, who did not offer to stir; but cast an eye at his father to know what he was to do. 'Sir,' said the shepherd, 'I hope we shall not appear ungrateful if we seem to refuse your favour; my little boy would, I am sure, fly to serve you on any other occasion. But, good sir, it is Sunday, and should any of my family be seen at a public house on a Sabbath-day, it would be a much greater grief to me than to drink water all my life. I am often talking against these doings to others, and if I should say one thing and do another, you can't think

what an advantage it would give many of my neighbours over me, who would be glad enough to report that they caught the shepherd's son at an ale-house, without explaining how it happened. Christians, you know, sir, must be doubly watchful, or they will not only bring disgrace on themselves, but what is much worse, on that holy name by which they are called.'

'Are you not a little too cautious, my honest friend?' said Mr. Johnson. 'I humbly ask your pardon, sir, replied the shepherd, 'if I think that impossible. In my poor notion, I no more understand how a man can be too cautious than how he can be too strong, or too healthy.'

'You are right, indeed,' said Mr. Johnson, 'as a general principle, but this struck me as a very small thing.' 'Sir,' said the shepherd, 'I am afraid you will think me very bold, but you encourage me to speak out.' 'It is what I wish,' said the gentleman.—'Then, sir,' resumed the shepherd, 'I doubt if, where there is a temptation to do wrong, any thing can be called small; that is, in short, if there be any such thing as a small wilful sin. A poor man, like me, is seldom called out to do great

things, so that it is not by a few striking deeds his character can be judged by his neighbours, but by the little round of daily customs he allows himself in.'—While they were thus talking, the children, who had stood very quietly behind, and had not stirred a foot, now began to scamper about all at once, and in a moment ran to the window-seat to pick up their little old hats. Mr. Johnson looked surprised at this disturbance; the shepherd asked his pardon, telling him it was the sound of the church bell, which had been the cause of their rudeness: for their mother had brought them up with such a fear of being too late for church, that it was, but who could catch the first stroke of the bell, and be first ready. He had always taught them to think that nothing was more indecent than to get into church after service was begun; for as the service opened with an exhortation to repentance, and a confession of sin, it looked very presumptuous not to be ready to join in it—it looked as if people did not feel themselves to be sinners. And though such as lived at a great distance might plead difference of clocks as an excuse, yet those who lived with-

in the sound of the bell, could pretend neither ignorance nor mistake.

Mary and her children set forward. Mr. Johnson and the shepherd followed, taking care to talk the whole way on such subjects as might fit them for the solemn duties of the place to which they were going. 'I have often been sorry to observe,' said Mr. Johnson, 'that many who are reckoned decent, good kind of people, and who would on no account neglect going to church, yet seem to care but little in what frame or temper of mind they go thither. They will talk of their worldly concerns till they get within the door, and then take them up again the very minute the sermon is over, which makes me ready to fear they lay too much stress on the mere form of going to a place of worship. Now, for my part, I always find that it requires a little time to bring my mind into a state fit to do any common business well, much more this great and most necessary business of all.'

'Yes, sir,' said the shepherd, 'and then I think too how busy I should be in preparing my mind, if I were going into the presence of a great gentleman, or a lord, or the king; and shall the King of kings be treated with

less respect? Besides, one likes to see people feel as if going to church was a thing of choice and pleasure, as well as a duty, and that they were as desirous not to be the last there, as they would be if they were going to a feast or a fair.'

After service, Mr. Jenkins, the clergyman, who was well acquainted with the character of Mr. Johnson, and had a great respect for him, accosted him with much civility; expressing his concern that he could not enjoy just now so much of his conversation as he wished, as he was obliged to visit a sick person at a distance, but hoped to have a little talk with him before he left the village.—As they walked along together, Mr. Johnson made such inquiries about the shepherd, as served to confirm him in the high opinion he entertained of his piety, good sense, industry, and self-denial. They parted, the clergyman promising to call in at the cottage in his way home.

The shepherd, who took it for granted that Mr. Johnson was gone to the parsonage, walked home with his wife and children, and was beginning, in his usual way, to catechise and instruct his family, when Mr. Johnson

came in, and insisted that the shepherd should go on with his instructions, just as if he were not there. This gentleman, who was very desirous of being useful to his own servants and workmen in the way of religious instruction, was sometimes sorry to find, that though he took a good deal of pains, they did not now and then quite understand him; for though his meaning were very good, his language was not always very plain; and though the *things* he said were not hard to be understood, yet the *words* were, especially to such as were very ignorant. And he now began to find out, that if people were ever so wise and good, yet if they had not a simple, agreeable, and familiar way of expressing themselves, some of their plain hearers would not be much the better for them. For this reason, he was not above listening to the plain, humble way in which this honest man taught his family, for though he knew that he himself had many advantages over the shepherd, had more learning, and could teach him many things, yet he was not too proud to learn even of so poor a man, in any point where he thought the shepherd might have the advantage of him.

things God has done for him? I, who am a shepherd, endeavour to fill my soul with a constant remembrance of that good Shepherd, who *feedeth me in green pastures, and maketh me to lie down beside the still waters, and whose rod and staff comfort me.*'

'You are happy,' said Mr. Johnson, 'in this retired life, by which you escape the corruptions of the world.' 'Sir,' said the shepherd, 'I do not escape the corruptions of my own evil nature. Even there, on that wild, solitary hill, I can find out that my heart is prone to evil thoughts. I suppose, sir, that different states have different temptations. You great folks that live in the world, perhaps are exposed to some, of which such a poor man as I am know nothing. But to one who leads a lonely life like me, evil thoughts are the chief besetting sin; and I can no more withstand these, without the grace of God, than a rich gentleman can withstand the snares of evil company, without the same grace. And I feel that I stand in need of God's help continually, and if he should give me up to my own evil heart, I should be lost.

Mr. Johnson approved of the shepherd's

sincerity, for he had always observed that where there was no humility, and no watchfulness against sin, there was no religion, and he said that the man who did not feel himself to be a sinner, in his opinion could not be a Christian.

Just as they were in this part of their discourse, Mr. Jenkins, the clergyman, came in. After the usual salutations, he said, 'Well, shepherd, I wish you joy; I know you will be sorry to gain any advantage by the death of a neighbour; but old Wilson, my clerk, was so infirm, and I trust so well prepared, that there is no reason to be sorry for his death. I have been to pray with him, but he died while I staid. I have always intended you should succeed to his place; it is no great matter of profit, but every little is something.'

'No great matter, sir!' cried the shepherd, 'indeed it is a great thing to me; it will more than pay my rent. Blessed be God for all his goodness.' Mary said nothing, but lifted up her eyes, full of tears, in silent gratitude.

'I am glad of this little circumstance,' said Mr. Jenkins, 'not only for your sake, but for the sake of the office itself. I so heartily reverence every religious institution, that I

would never have even the *Amen* added to the excellent prayers of our church, by vain or profane lips; and if it depended on me, there should be no such thing in the land as an idle, drunken, or irreligious parish clerk. Sorry I am to say, that this matter is not always sufficiently attended to, and that I know some of a very indifferent character.'

Mr. Johnson now inquired of the clergyman, whether there were many children in the parish: 'More than you would expect,' replied he, 'from the seeming smallness of it; but there are some little hamlets which you do not see.' 'I think,' returned Mr. Johnson, 'I recollect that in the conversation I had with the shepherd on the hill yonder, he told me you had no Sunday school.' 'I am sorry to say we have none,' said the minister; 'I do what I can to remedy this misfortune by public chatechising; but having two or three churches to serve, I cannot give so much time as I wish to private instruction; and having a large family of my own, and no assistance from others, I have never been able to establish a school.'

'There is an excellent institution in London,' said Mr. Johnson, 'called the Sunday-

School Society, which kindly gives books and other helps on the application of such pious ministers as stand in need of their aid, and which I am sure would have assisted you, but I think we shall be able to do something ourselves.—Shepherd,' continued he, 'if I were a king, and had it in my power to make you a rich and a great man, with speaking a word, I would not do it. Those who are raised by some sudden stroke, much above the station in which divine Providence had placed them, seldom turn out very good or very happy. I have never had any great things in my power, but as far as I have been able, I have been always glad to assist the worthy; I have, however, never attempted or desired to set any poor man much above his natural condition, but it is a pleasure to me to lend him such assistance as may make that condition more easy to himself, and to put him in a way which shall call him to the performance of more duties than perhaps he could have performed without my help, and of performing them in a better manner.—What rent do you pay for this cottage?'

'Fifty shillings a year, sir.'

'It is in a sad, tattered condition, is there not a better to be had in the village?'

'That in which the poor clerk lived,' said the clergyman, 'is not only more tight and whole, but has two decent chambers, and a very large light kitchen.' 'That will be very convenient,' replied Mr. Johnson, 'pray what is the rent?' 'I think,' said the shepherd, 'poor neighbour Wilson gave somewhere about four pounds a year, or it might be guineas.' 'Very well,' said Mr. Johnson, 'and what will the clerk's place be worth, think you?' 'About three pounds,' was the answer.

'Now,' continued Mr. Johnson, 'my plan is, that the shepherd should take that house immediately; for as the poor man is dead, there will be no need of waiting till quarter-day, if I make up the difference.' 'True, sir,' said Mr. Jenkins, 'and I am sure my wife's father, whom I expect to-morrow, will willingly assist a little towards buying some of the clerk's old goods. And the sooner they remove, the better, for poor Mary caught that bad rheumatism by sleeping under a leaky thatch.' The shepherd was too much moved to speak, and Mary could hardly sob

out, 'O, sir, you are too good; indeed this house will do very well.' 'It may do very well for you and your poor children, Mary,' said Mr. Johnson gravely, 'but it will not do for a school; the kitchen is neither large nor light enough. Shepherd,' continued he, 'with your good minister's leave and kind assistance, I propose to set up in this parish a Sunday school, and to make you the master. It will not interfere with your weekly calling, and it is the only lawful way in which you can turn the Sabbath into a day of some little profit to your family, by doing, as I hope, a great deal of good to the souls of others. The rest of the week you will work as usual. The difference of rent between this house and the clerk's, I shall pay myself, for to put you into a better house at your own expense would be no great kindness. As for honest Mary, who is not fit for hard labour, or any out-of-door work, I propose to endow a small weekly school, of which she shall be the mistress, and employ her notable turn to good account, by teaching ten or a dozen girls to knit, sew, spin, card, or any other useful way of getting their bread; for all this I shall only pay her the

usual price, for I am not going to make you rich, but useful.

'Not rich, sir?' cried the shepherd—'How can I ever be thankful enough for such blessings? And will my poor Mary have a dry thatch over her head? And shall I be able to send for the doctor when I am like to lose her? Indeed my cup runs over with blessings; I hope God will give me humility.' Here he and Mary looked at each other, and burst into tears. The gentleman saw their distress, and kindly walked out upon the green before the door, that these honest people might give vent to their feelings. As soon as they were alone, they crept into one corner of the room, where they thought they could not be seen, and fell on their knees, devoutly blessing and praising God for his mercies. Never were heartier prayers presented than this grateful couple offered up for their benefactors. The warmth of their gratitude could only be equalled by the earnestness with which they besought the blessing of God on the work in which they were going to engage.

The two gentlemen now left this happy family, and walked to the Parsonage, where *the* evening was spent in a manner very ed-

ifying to Mr. Johnson, who the next day took all proper measures for putting the shepherd in immediate possession of his now comfortable habitation. Mr. Jenkins's father-in-law, the worthy gentleman who gave the shepherd's wife the blankets, in the first part of this history, arrived at the Parsonage before Mr. Johnson left it, and assisted in fitting up the Clerk's cottage.

Mr. Johnson took his leave, promising to call on the worthy Minister and his new Clerk once a year, in his summer's journey over the Plain, as long as it should please GOD to spare his life. *Z.*

MAXIMS.

LANGUAGES.

The great advantage of being acquainted with many languages, consists in understanding the sense of those nations, and authors, who speak and write those languages. Language is only to express thoughts; and if a man be heedless, and will not allow himself time to think, his words will be frivolous and trifling.

LYING.

Nothing is more criminal, mean, or ridiculous, than lying. It is the production either of malice, cowardice, or vanity; but it generally misses of its aim in every one of these vices; for lies are always detected sooner or later. If we advance a malicious lie, in order to affect any man's fortune or character, we may, indeed, injure him for some time; but we shall certainly be the greatest sufferers in the end: for, as soon as we are detected, we

are blasted for the infamous attempt; and whatever is said afterwards to the disadvantage of that person, however true, passes for calumny. To lie, or to equivocate, (which is the same thing) to excuse ourselves for what we have said or done, and to avoid the danger of the shame that we apprehend from it, discovers our fear as well as our falsehood; and we only increase, instead of avoiding the danger and shame; we shew ourselves to be the lowest and meanest of mankind, and are sure to be always treated as such. If we have the misfortune to be in the wrong, there is something noble in frankly owning it; it is the only way of atoning for it, and the only way to be forgiven. To remove a present danger, by equivocating, evading, or shuffling, is something so despicable, and betrays so much fear, that whoever practises them deserves to be chastised. There is another sort of lies, which, though inoffensive, are wonderfully ridiculous; those, for example, which a mistaken vanity suggests, that defeat the very end for which they are calculated. These are chiefly narrative and historical lies, all intended to do infinite honour to their author. He is always the hero of his own romances;

he has been in dangers which nobody but himself ever escaped; he has beheld with his own eyes, whatever other people have heard or read of; and has ridden more miles post in one day, than ever courier went in two. He is presently discovered, and as soon becomes the object of contempt and ridicule.

Nothing but truth can carry us through the world, with either our conscience or our honour unwounded. It is not only our duty, but our interest; as a proof of which, it might be observed, that the greatest fools are the greatest liars. We may safely judge of a man's truth, by his degree of understanding.

MODESTY.

Modesty is a commendable quality, and generally accompanies true merit; it engages and captivates the minds of people; for nothing is more shocking and disgustful than presumption and impudence. By this I do not mean a steady assurance, which I think is of infinite utility and advantage, in presenting oneself with the same coolness and unconcern, in any and every company; till one can do that, I am very sure that one can never present oneself well. Whatever is done under

concern and embarrassment, must be ill done; and, till a man is absolutely easy and unconcerned in every company, he will never be thought to have kept good, nor be very welcome in it.

OLD HABITS.

Humming a tune within ourselves, drumming with our fingers, making a noise with our feet, and such awkward habits, being all breaches of good manners, are therefore indications of our contempt for the persons present, and, consequently, should not be practised. Eating very quick or very slow, is characteristic of vulgarity; the former infers poverty; the latter, if abroad, that you are disgusted with your entertainment; and, if at home, that you are rude enough to give your friends what you cannot eat yourself. Eating soup with your nose in your plate, is also vulgar. So likewise is smelling to the meat while on the fork, before you put it in your mouth. If you dislike what is sent upon your plate, leave it; but never by smelling to, or examining it, appear to tax your friend with placing unwholesome provisions before you.

Spitting on the floor or carpet, is a filthy

LIBERTY.

Every man has a natural right to "his liberty; and whoever endeavours to ravish it from him, deserves death more than the robber who attacks us for our money on the highway."

ADVICE.

Advice is seldom welcome, and those who want it the most always like it the least.

AMBITION.

The being desirous of surpassing others in merit and learning is a very laudable ambition; but the wishing to outshine others in rank, in expense, in clothes, and in equipage, is silly and ridiculous.

The ambition of a man of sense and honour is to be distinguished by a character and reputation of knowledge, truth, and virtue; things which are not to be purchased, and are to be acquired only by a good head and an honest heart.

ENVY.

Envy is one of the meanest and most tormenting of all passions, as there is hardly a

person existing that has not given uneasiness to an envious breast; for the envious man cannot be happy, while he beholds others so.

HUMANITY.

Humanity is the particular characteristic of great minds; little vicious minds abound with anger and revenge; and are incapable of feeling the exalted pleasure of forgiving their enemies.

AFFECTATION.

We are never made so ridiculous by the qualities we have, as by those we affect to have. We had better appear to be what we are, than affect to appear what we are not.

APPEARANCE.

In every profession, every one affects to appear what he would willingly be thought: so that we may say, The world is composed of nothing but appearances.

PHILLIS AND DAMARIS,

Were two country lasses, the pride of the village where they dwelt. Both of them were handsome to perfection, but of dispositions exceedingly different. The unaffected Damaris was attentive to assist the infirmities of an aged parent, whom decrepitude confined to his cottage. She carefully attended his flock, or was employed in some useful and necessary work. While knitting or spinning to procure him a more comfortable subsistence, her cheerful songs expressed a contented heart. Her dress, though poor, was neat and clean; she studied no vain or fantastic ornament in it; and whenever her person was complimented, she lent no attention.

Phillis had been bred up under a careless mother. She was extremely conscious of being pretty. On holidays no body was so spruce. Wreaths of flowers and ribbands bedecked her hat; every fountain had been consulted for her dress, and every meadow ransacked to adorn it. From morn to night she danced or sported on the green. The shepherds admired or flattered her, and she believed every word they said. Yet she felt many

a discontent. Sometimes her garland was not sufficiently becoming; sometimes she imagined that a favourite shepherd was inattentive to her, or that he admired a new face. Every day was spent in frolic and dissipation, and every night brought with it some disquiet.

She was one morning sitting pensively under a poplar, tying up a nosegay, when she heard Damaris singing cheerfully in praise of industry. Phillis approached her, and found she was busily engaged in plying the distaff.

'How is it possible, Damaris,' said she, that you should always be so merry while leading a life of drudgery?'

'I prefer this way of life,' answered Damaris, 'because I perceive you are very unhappy in yours. I enjoy at least tranquillity and peace of mind, because I acquit myself well in the station in which Providence has placed me. I am the means of producing comfort for a good old father who supported me in helpless infancy, and now requires this return of duty. When I have penned the fold at night I return to his cot, and cheer him with my presence. I then prepare a supper, of which we partake with more pleasure than you do at a feast. My father afterwards re-

lates to me the stories he has treasured up in his memory, and imparts the precepts of wisdom and experience. Sometimes he teaches me a song, and on holidays I read to him out of some excellent book. Thus, Phillis, does my life pass. My expectations are few, but I cherish many a joyful hope, which makes my heart light and easy.'

GENEROSITY.

BY ——— PRATT.

Oh Generosity, what a source of joy art thou to thyself and others! Thou art the sun of the soul; the clouds of distress flee from before thee; the storms of misery are dispersed; and as thy impartial beam spreads comforts and blessings on every side, thou appearest only to shine the brighter, in proportion to the felicity that is thus benignly extended! Continue then, oh continue to illume my bosom: let this hand forget its employment, and this heart cease its motion, when it ceases to feel thy amiable energy!

FINIS.

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